

# KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE SEMINOLE

BY

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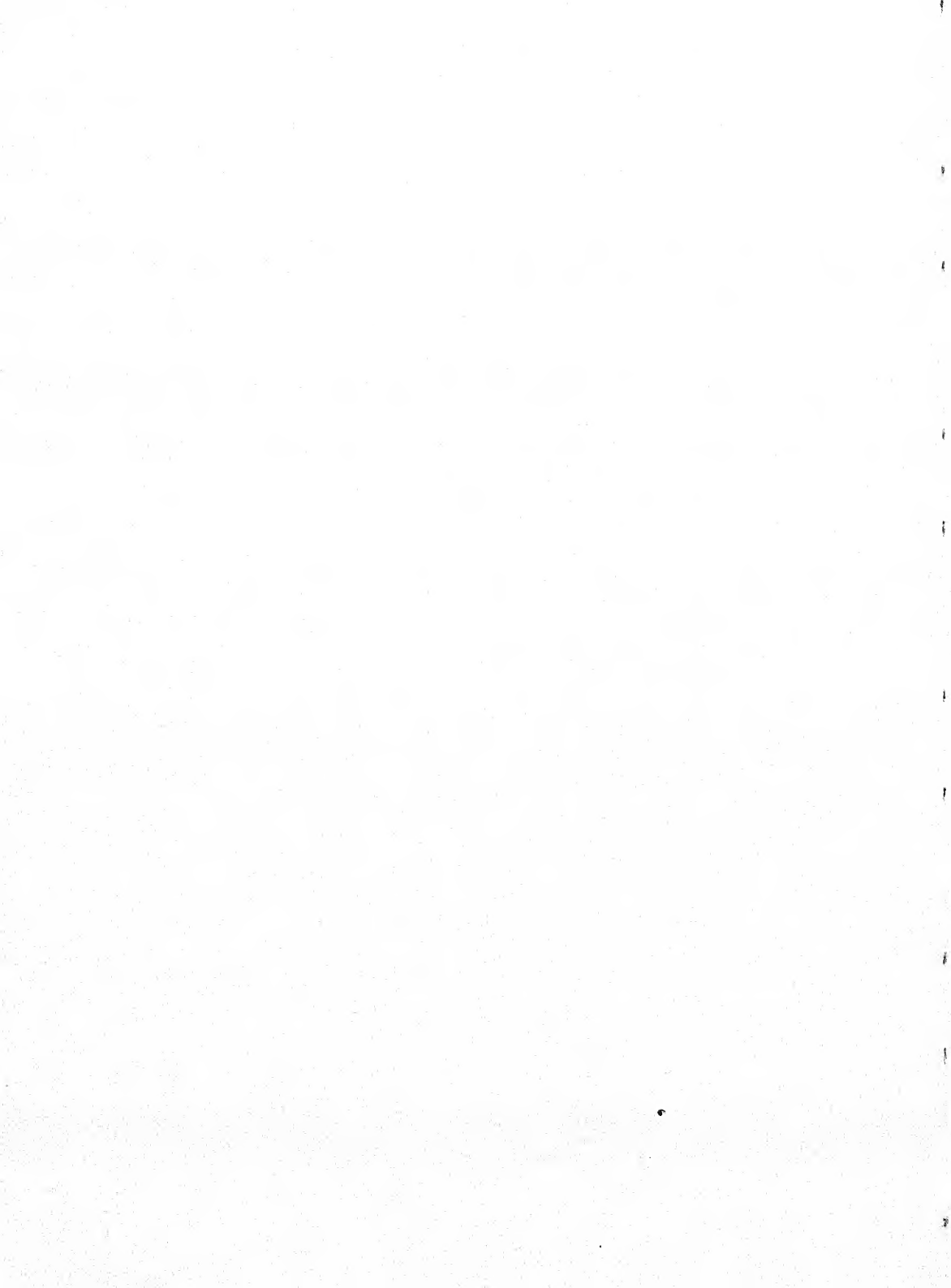
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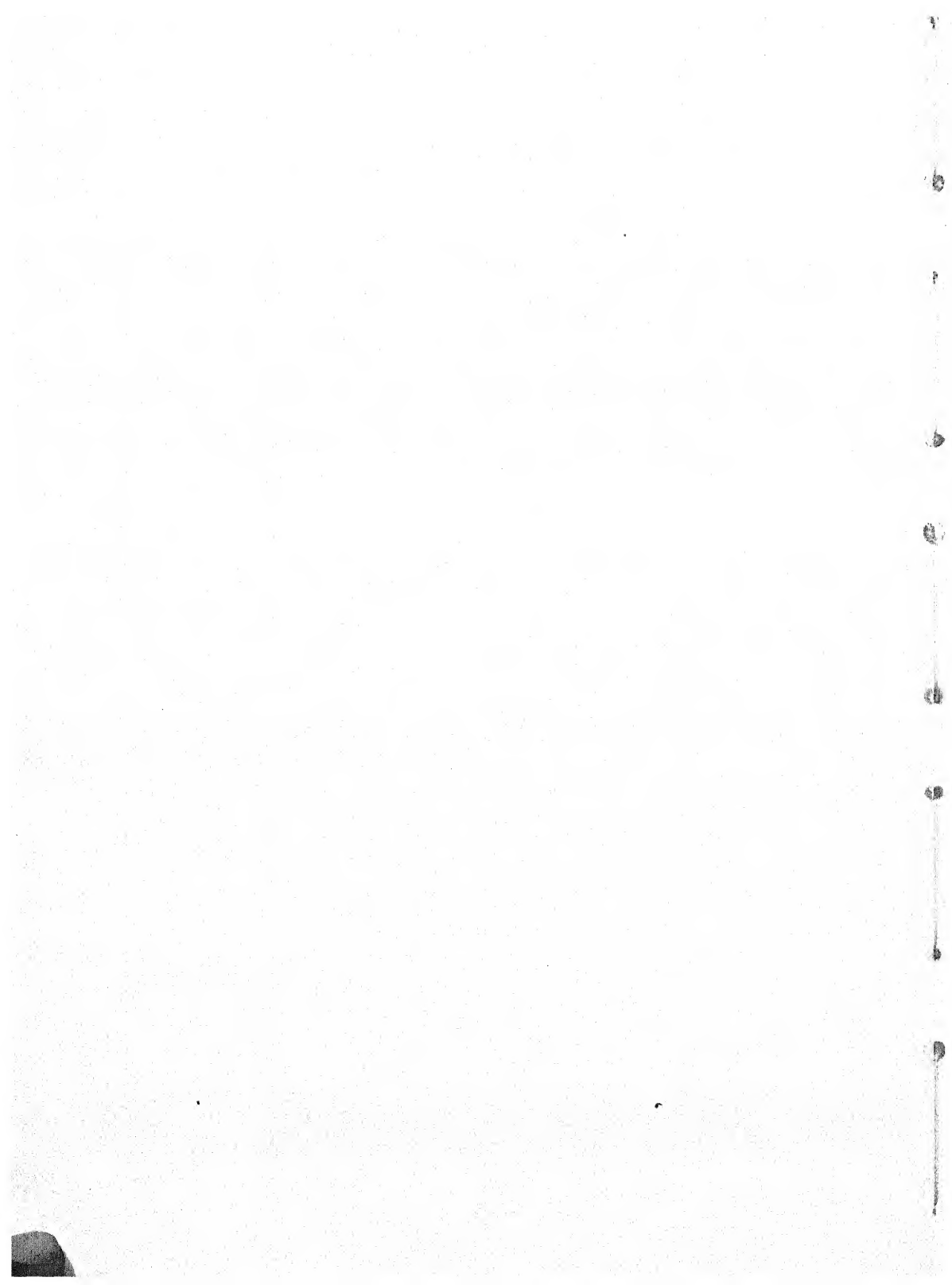




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## PREFACE

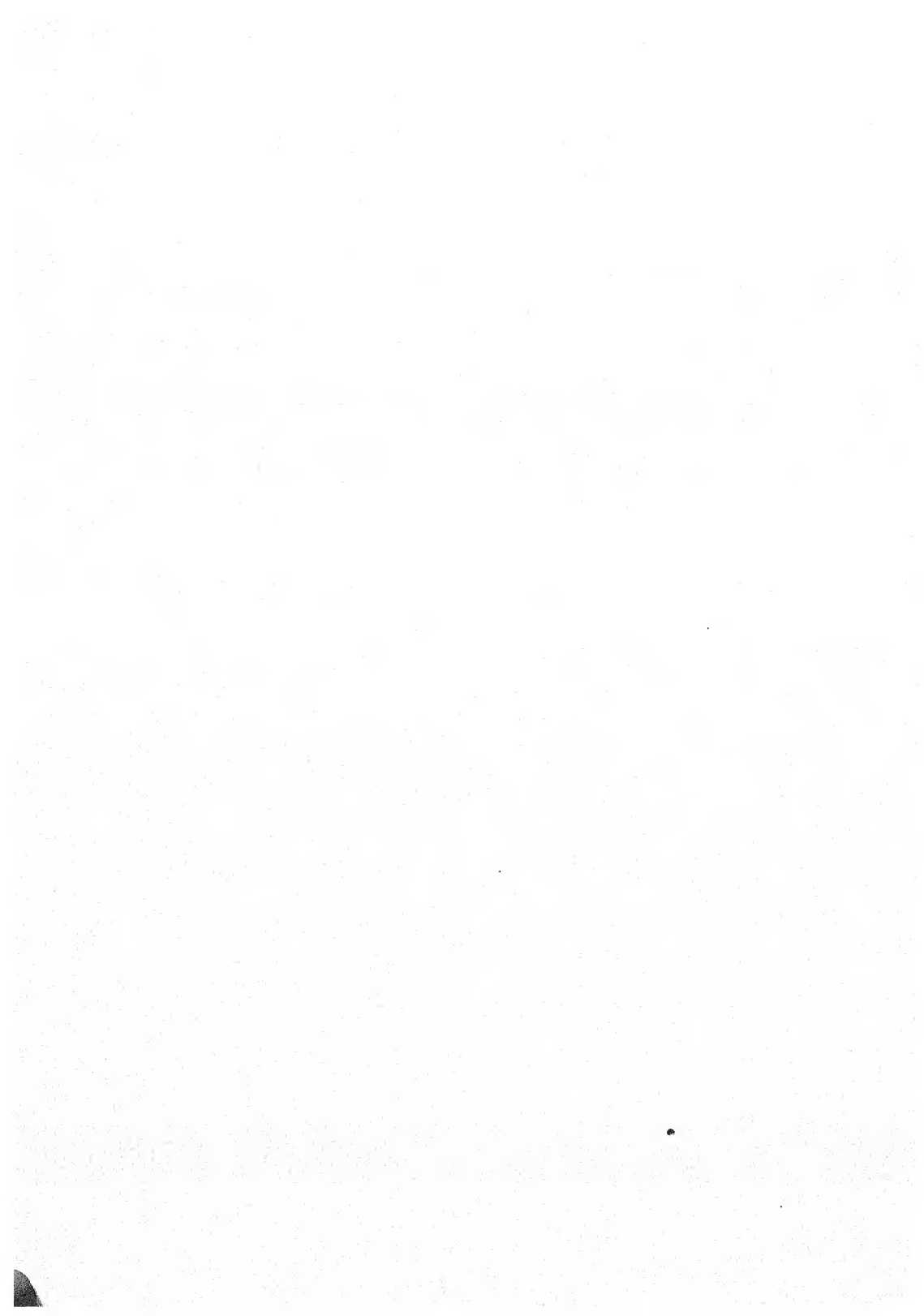
The following report on the Oklahoma Seminole is based on five months of field work during the autumn of 1938 and the summer of 1939. The financial support which made the work possible was generously provided by the Department of Anthropology of the University of Chicago. I am particularly indebted to Dr. Fay-Cooper Cole, Dr. Robert Redfield, and Dr. Frederick Eggan for their interest in the project. I especially wish to record my appreciation of Dr. Eggan's advice and criticism.

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The orthography of the Seminole terms appearing in the following pages has been checked by Dr. Mary Haas. In my beginning struggles with phonetic recording her aid was more than welcome and most appreciated.

Lastly, I wish to record my indebtedness to my Indian informants, a list of whom appears as an appendix. In particular, I take this opportunity to thank Mr. Wesley Tanyan, my interpreter, for his intelligent and critical co-operation.

ALEXANDER SPOEHR



# KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE SEMINOLE

## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the major problems in the ethnology of the American Indian is the determination of types of aboriginal social organization. A second important problem is how these types have changed following the attempted adjustment of Indian tribes to new social and environmental conditions, including those resulting from the intrusion of the white man into the native habitat. The present paper on the Oklahoma Seminole has reference to these problems, within the restricted field of Southeastern kinship.

The kinship systems of the Southeast are of interest for several reasons. This part of the United States seems to have been the home of a large block of tribes possessing a single type of system—the Crow type. The essential features of this type are well-known and have been described elsewhere (Spier, 1925, pp. 72-74; Lesser, 1929, pp. 711-712). Principal distinguishing characteristics are the classing of the father's sister's female descendants through females with the father's sister and the classing of her male descendants through females with the father's brother. However, although the available data on the Southeastern kinship systems are sufficient for preliminary analysis, they are not extensive enough for a complete understanding of the various systems and their relation to forms of marriage, residential arrangements, descent, and other aspects of social organization. More field data are necessary to develop further the classifications and correlations already made on the basis of the research of Swanton, Speck, and others. Also, several years ago Eggan analyzed the information on the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, and Yuchi systems and pointed out that with the exception of the Eastern Cherokee they do not conform strictly to a Crow type but instead are odd variations of it. In addition, he cited evidence to show that they formerly did conform to a Crow type, but changed in similar ways under the pressure of the same kind of contact with whites (Eggan, 1937). Here was an interesting hypothesis which promised to yield fruitful results if tested and developed in the field. What additional data could be gathered to show that "pure" Crow types existed in the Southeast? What further evidence could be found of recent change away from these types? What were and are the conditions under which this change has taken place? These questions led to the present study.

The following chapters on Seminole kinship have reference primarily to the first of the three questions just asked—what additional evidence exists to support or disprove the hypothesis that “pure” Crow types were formerly widespread in the Southeast? Gilbert’s material on the Eastern Cherokee (Gilbert, 1937) showed that they retained a relatively unchanged Crow type system. Perhaps another of the less acculturated Southeastern groups could be found whose social organization had changed no more than that of the Eastern Cherokee. The Seminole were chosen as a likely possibility, while they had the further advantage of being an off-spring of the Creeks and might accordingly preserve aspects of social organization which had disappeared or been altered in the parent tribe. Field work was accordingly begun with the Seminole and carried on among both the Florida and Oklahoma divisions. A brief outline of the social organization of the Cow Creek Seminole of Florida was presented in a previous paper (Spoehr, 1941a). The present report extends the investigation to their brethren in Oklahoma.

I have tried to do two things in the pages that follow. First, I have attempted to give a concise account of Oklahoma Seminole kinship during the days of the Seminole Nation before the allotment of Indian lands (1903). Although Swanton included the Seminole in his work on Creek social organization (Swanton, 1928), no intensive study of their kinship system has been made. Second, I have compared the Oklahoma and Florida groups in order to find out the characteristics of the Seminole kinship system before the removal west of most of the tribe after the Seminole Wars of the nineteenth century. The relevance of this material for the comparative study of Southeastern social organization is then stated in the concluding chapter.

## II. KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE OKLAHOMA SEMINOLE

### HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The Seminole are a Muskogean tribe that began to be known by its present name during the last few decades of the eighteenth century. After the destruction of the Apalachee in northern Florida, a body of Oconee moved southward into that state and formed the nucleus about which the Seminole grew. These first-comers spoke Hitchiti. To this base were added southward-moving groups of Lower Creeks, whose language was Muskogee proper. After the Creek War of 1813-14 a large body of Upper Creeks also migrated to Florida, with the result that the predominant element in the tribe became Muskogee. Although the Seminole exhibited a high degree of cultural homogeneity, the linguistic cleavage between the Muskogee-speaking and the Hitchiti- or Mikasuki-speaking Indians has remained to the present day among the Florida Seminole and persisted well into the latter half of the nineteenth century in the Oklahoma division of the tribe.

The relations between Indians and whites in Florida always tended to be turbulent, and hostilities existed off and on until 1832, when a number of Seminole leaders signed a treaty whereby they were bound to move west of the Mississippi. However, a large part of the tribe resisted and under the leadership of Osceola waged the Second Seminole War, which lasted for nearly eight years. The Seminole were finally defeated and all but a handful, who retreated into the fastness of the interior, were removed to the west.

By 1843 the major part of the Seminole had been transported to Indian Territory, which is now part of Oklahoma. Their lot was a hapless one for more than a decade following. Added to the hardships resulting from the radical change of natural environment were those imposed by a misguided federal government, under whose ill-planned policy the Seminole remained restless and unhappy. At the time of their departure from Florida the Indians were told to leave their axes, hoes, and household utensils, as new ones would be furnished them on their arrival in Oklahoma. When the Seminole reached their destination they were destitute, and then found that the promises of the government were fulfilled inadequately or not at all. Even more irritating was the government's attempt to force them to join the Creek Nation and settle on the lands of that tribe. Some of the latter had fought against the Seminole during the

Seminole Wars and the Florida Indians retained considerable bitterness towards them. The matter was further complicated by disputes arising over the ownership of Seminole Negro slaves, many of whom were claimed by Creeks, while the Seminole practice of allowing their Negroes to live in separate communities with a relatively great amount of liberty and freedom clashed with Creek policy. The net result was that a large part of the Seminole tribe did not settle on Creek territory at all, but instead remained around the Fort Gibson army post in the Cherokee Nation, while those that were induced to build their homes on Creek land refused to subject themselves to Creek laws or to participate in the government of that tribe. Finally, the United States recognized the folly of attempting to force the Seminole to amalgamate with the Creeks, and by a treaty entered into in 1856 gave the Seminole a separate tract of land adjoining the Creek Nation on the west. This was the first major step toward the social rehabilitation of the tribe (Foreman, 1934, pp. 223-270).

Though the settlement of their new land was retarded by the depredations of roving Plains Indians, the Seminole gradually occupied the territory set aside for them. Coincident with this there emerged a movement designed to set up a tribal government similar to that of the Creek, Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw. A meeting to discuss such organization was held in 1859, and a council house erected in 1860; it seemed that at last the Seminole would gain a measure of stability and independence under their own laws. But the promise of a brighter future was shattered with the advent of the Civil War, a conflict that gathered the tribe into its toils and left it once again poverty-stricken and destitute. The Confederate government early made advances to the Indians who had migrated from the Southeast. A division of opinion split the latter, however, and part of the Seminole cast their lot with the South and the remainder with the North. Those who favored the North joined a large band of Creeks under the leadership of the famed chief, Hopothle Yahola, and effected a bloody retreat northward into Kansas, later moving to Fort Gibson. The southern Seminoles moved south to the Red River for the duration of the war. Both northern and southern divisions of the tribe contributed to the armed forces of the Union and Confederate armies, both suffered losses, and the Seminole as a whole underwent a serious setback by their participation in a conflict that was not of their making.

After the conclusion of hostilities the Seminole entered into a new treaty with the United States government in 1866. By this



treaty they ceded back the land granted them in 1856 and received in return a much smaller tract whose boundaries roughly coincided with those of the present Seminole County in Oklahoma. This treaty marked the beginning of a new era in the tumultuous history of the tribe. Despite the gradual advance of the white civilization that slowly engulfed them and eventually brought their final downfall, the Seminole enjoyed for the next thirty-five years a period of relative peace and stability. Certain aspects of this period deserve more extended comment.

From the Civil War to the time of allotment in 1903 the material condition of the Indians gradually improved. In this they were required to start nearly from scratch. The northern group was moved from the Fort Gibson refugee camp to their new country in the fall of 1866 and supplied with food rations until their own crops could be raised and matured. The willingness with which the Seminole worked to establish themselves is attested by their agent (Com. Ind. Aff., 1867, pp. 327-328):

They at once commenced the erection of cabins and providing themselves with suitable places for winter. The land on which they were located was new, uncultivated, and for the greater part covered with timber. On this land and without farming implements, except such as had been transported with them from Kansas and Fort Gibson, and without any seeds furnished them except corn, they were told that they must raise sufficient for their own subsistence after the first day of July, 1867, as the government had determined to furnish no more supplies after that time. . . . During the winter they made more than 100,000 rails, some bands of 100 persons fencing 500 acres, by carrying the rails on their backs. . . . By a system of government enforced by the chief and headmen, every man and woman was compelled to work; and any neglect on the day appointed visited with a fine. . . . There has been a large surplus of corn raised this year. They have been careful of the moneys paid them, and have invested all their power in hogs and stock, and the coming year will show a prosperous, contented people.

The southern Seminoles did not move onto the tribal lands until 1869 (Com. Ind. Aff., 1869, p. 419). The schism caused by the Civil War healed with relative rapidity and the Indians quietly pursued their agricultural occupation, enlarging their fields and cultivating their crops of corn with increased energy. In 1873 the Seminole agent estimated that they had 7,600 acres under cultivation, had produced 150,000 bushels of corn and 4,000 bushels of potatoes during the year, and owned 10,500 head of cattle and 25,000 of swine (Com. Ind. Aff., 1873, p. 336). In this connection an interesting fact emerges. Although some ambitious individuals among the Indians continued to strive to increase their wealth, most of the tribe, once their basic needs of food and shelter were satisfied, were content with their lot. The census of 1890 (Census Bull., 1894, p. 69) stated that the Seminole "are generally poor,

live in small houses, frequently with earth floors and without windows." Indeed, in commenting on the days before allotment many of my old informants would remark, "We were poor, but things were running right and we were happy." Although contact with whites must have increased the Indian's range of wants, these apparently did not expand enough to stimulate the Seminole to an undue striving for material wealth.

The question naturally arises as to the character and extent of contact with whites during the period from the Civil War to allotment. This may be conveniently examined as it refers to two categories of facts: (1) the contact agents, or representatives of white civilization among the Seminole, and (2) the contact milieu, or setting in which the contact took place.<sup>1</sup> The actual results of acculturation will be considered in a later chapter.

The contact agents were principally three: the government administrator, the white settler, and the missionary. The relative importance of the first two is difficult to determine. An Indian agent was stationed in the Seminole Nation until 1874, when the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole agencies were combined and a single office established at Muskogee (Com. Ind. Aff., 1876, p. 80). Although the Seminole agent was well aware of the state of affairs among his charges, the actual degree of his participation in their activities cannot be discerned accurately; after his office became a part of the Union Agency in Muskogee, the dealings of the government with the Seminole seem to have been very limited and confined primarily to financial transactions with officials of the tribal government. Muskogee was more than a hundred miles removed by a rough wagon road and the distance was apparently sufficient to discourage much contact between Seminole and agent. As for the white settler, his rôle is even more difficult to ascertain. He was continuously present, but in relatively small numbers. According to the 1890 census there were ninety-six white persons living in the Seminole Nation (Senate Report 377, 1894, p. 70). The same year the agent reported that the last illegally resident white intruder, a species of squatter that greatly troubled the other four "civilized" tribes, had been removed by the Indian police of the agency (Com. Ind. Aff., 1890, p. 91). The white settlers increased up to allotment but I do not believe they were ever present in sufficient numbers during this period to cause undue

<sup>1</sup> The terms "contact agent" and "contact milieu" are borrowed from Fortes (1936, p. 26).

disruption of Indian life. Miscegenation occurred of course. However, by this time the Seminole were well acquainted with the white man, for they had known him for more than a century.

Undoubtedly the most influential representatives of white civilization were the missionaries. The government agent was stationed to transact certain specific business with the tribe; the white settler entered Indian territory to better his own personal fortunes; but the missionary was consciously engaged in an attempt to alter Indian ways of life. His contact was more intimate and his influence unquestionably greater.

During the years of their residence in Oklahoma, the Seminole received missionaries from three Christian sects—the Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists. Of these, the Presbyterians were first upon the scene. Apparently their first missionary was one Rev. M'Kenny, who in 1843 was sent by the Presbyterian Board of Missions. However, he found the Seminole in an unsettled condition and, feeling that he had little chance of success, soon abandoned the effort for more profitable work among the Choctaw (Benson, 1860, p. 152). The next year, John Bemo, an unusual Seminole who had received some education in Philadelphia, opened a school for the Indians. This effort culminated in the establishment of the Oak Ridge Mission School by Bemo and John Lilley, a Presbyterian missionary who had come west in 1848. Also associated with Bemo and Lilley was J. R. Ramsey, who joined them in 1856. The school lasted for ten years until 1858, when the Seminole moved to the land granted them by the Treaty of 1856 (Foreman, 1934, p. 246). Ramsey accompanied the Indians and continued missionary work among them.

The first representative of the Baptists arrived in 1859. He was Joseph Murrow, born in Georgia, and himself the son of a Baptist minister (Thoburn and Wright, 1929, p. 213). A church of seven members was started in 1860 and held its own until the Civil War (Routh, 1932, p. 42). It is not surprising to find that Murrow and his converts were sympathetic to the South and joined the southern band of Seminoles, Murrow himself being appointed Confederate agent to the tribe (Thoburn and Wright, 1929, p. 391). The Christian church did not thereby desert the Indians of the northern group, however, for the Presbyterians found them more congenial than their southern tribesmen and the north-south cleavage came to coincide with the line of denominational difference (Thoburn and Wright, 1929, p. 391).

After the Civil War the Baptist and Presbyterian missionaries returned with the Seminole to their tribal lands. Efforts to Christianize the Indians continued and were augmented by the entrance of the Methodists into the field. Churches became established, Indians were ordained as ministers, and the movement took root. By the time of allotment in 1903 Christianity was an accepted religion. Numerically, however, the non-Christians seem to have remained superior. The ratio of the two is difficult to determine, but probably two-thirds of the Indians were still pagan. The ceremonial square grounds continued in operation. As a matter of fact the growth of churches is primarily a post-allotment phenomenon; previously Christianity was established only among a minority. Furthermore, the distinction between Christian and pagan was not, and is not now clear-cut, for a considerable number of people participate in the services of both faiths. In 1903 the situation may be envisaged as a small nucleus of devout Christians, containing a number of the most influential men of the tribe, surrounded by several hundred followers of varying degrees of faithfulness, while the remainder of the people preferred to follow in the footsteps of their forefathers.

From the standpoint of social change the missionaries' part in introducing schools was probably more important than their attempts at conversion. Four small day schools were started in 1868, the first year of schooling after the Civil War. Two of these, however, were for Negro freedmen (Com. Ind. Aff., 1868, p. 286). The four schools continued in operation under the superintendence of Ramsey, the Presbyterian missionary, though in his report for 1871 the government agent noted that there was considerable difficulty in the schools because the white teachers did not know Muskogee nor the pupils English (Com. Ind. Aff., 1871, p. 584). As a matter of fact, it was on instruction in the latter language that the major part of the teachers' efforts were expended. How effective these were I do not know, but the Presbyterians increased their work by opening a boarding school, designed to enroll twelve Indian children, in 1871 (Com. Ind. Aff., 1872, p. 242). It was suspended for a time in 1873, but the agent's report for 1880 reveals it back in operation. At this time 226 children attended either day or boarding school one month of the year (Com. Ind. Aff., 1880, p. 96). A second boarding school was started, this one by the Methodists (Com. Ind. Aff., 1880, pp. 280-281). The Indians soon perceived sufficient value in the white man's education to divert a share of the tribal income to the support of the school system (Com. Ind.

Aff., 1886, p. 154). The latter was further expanded in 1891 with the opening of the Mikasuki Academy, which finished its first term with an enrollment of one hundred boys in regular attendance (Com. Ind. Aff., 1892, p. 256). Emahaka, a similar school for girls, commenced operations in 1893 with approximately the same capacity (Chaney, 1928, p. 82). Mikasuki and Emahaka displaced the two older boarding schools and until allotment the educational system was composed of these two academies, together with from four to six day-schools; the expense of maintaining the schools was borne by the tribe, except that the teachers were supplied by the mission boards of the Presbyterian and Baptist churches (Com. Ind. Aff., 1895, p. 161). Thus, although education in the white man's manner started slowly, it was well established by the end of the Nation. Actually the instruction was very elementary, but those who received it at least learned a certain amount of English and a barrier to the introduction of new ideas was broken down.

Nevertheless the Seminole remained relatively free from intense contact with whites. There were basically two reasons for this, both of which refer to the contact milieu. They are to be found in (1) the geographic position of the tribe, and (2) the lack of transportation facilities. The influx of whites into Indian Territory was from the east, north, and south, but the Seminole Nation was placed so that it was protected from white infiltration by the lands of the other four "civilized" tribes. Furthermore, the only means of transportation was by wagon road, for it was not until 1896 that the first railroad, the Choctaw, Oklahoma, and Gulf, was built through Seminole territory. The Saint Louis and San Francisco came in 1900 and the Kansas and Texas in 1903, but all these were constructed in the closing years of the national government (Chaney, 1928, p. 103). In the geographic position of the Seminole and in the lack of easy transportation facilities lie two main reasons why the Seminole were affected less by white contact than the other Southeastern tribes in Oklahoma during the last forty years of the nineteenth century. Coupled with these factors was an oft-noted tendency for the Seminole to cling to their own customs and to remain essentially conservative in the face of change.

These remarks are not meant to imply that during the period from the close of the Civil War to allotment in 1903 the old Indian culture was left to follow its own development, free from the influence of the ever-impinging white civilization. Like the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Creek, the Seminole had adopted European dress and were known as one of the "Five Civilized

Tribes." Their native arts and handicrafts virtually disappeared, and much of the old culture was modified or destroyed. It is true, however, that the economic foundations of the Indian society remained intact. This I believe to be very important, for the social organization was thereby enabled to adjust itself to the ever-present forces of social change. When the Seminole Nation came to an end with the allotment of Indian lands, it was not long before social disruption became the order of the day.

The foregoing paragraphs have been introduced to allow a certain historical perspective for the data on Oklahoma Seminole social organization. These data have reference to the period preceding 1900. They were gathered from old full-blood Indian informants, who remembered conditions during the years of the Nation. However, these men and women came from families of different degrees of conservatism and it is doubtful how long certain customs—the restrictions on widows, for instance—endured. Finally, the question of what was, and what in the minds of informants should have been, cannot be checked adequately through observation of present behavior, for the traditional patterns of action have largely vanished into the past. Therefore the data must be allocated to a general period rather than to a more definite historical horizon. This period is roughly that from the Civil War to the time of allotment. Although certain aspects of the social organization, such as the terminological aspect of the kinship system, continued in operation for many years, the Indian culture has now broken down. Particularly in the last three decades change has been very rapid, and today the Oklahoma Seminole are in an advanced stage of acculturation. The old forms of social grouping and social control have disintegrated, while the tribe as an integrated social body can scarcely be said to exist. It is with the full realization of these limitations that the following material is presented.

## SOCIAL GROUPINGS

### THE NATION

As one of the Five Civilized Tribes, the Seminole enjoyed a peculiar legal status. The Seminole, Creek, Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw were self-governed tribes which, though located within the territorial limits of the United States, were not subject to its laws or to the jurisdiction of its courts. Thus, the citizens of the Seminole Nation were amenable only to their own laws and were entitled to have criminal and civil cases tried in the courts of the

Seminole Nation. However, as the population of the area contiguous to the territory of the Five Civilized Tribes increased with the years, the pressure of white expansion became so great that the whites overflowed into Indian Territory, the Indians admitting them into their country. Though the influx did not affect the Seminole to any great extent, this movement resulted in large numbers of whites settling in the territory of the other four tribes. The white residents were without school facilities, nor did they come under the jurisdiction of the Indian laws and courts. This created an unhealthy condition, for Indian Territory became the refuge of criminals from adjacent areas. In 1889 and 1890, Congress accordingly gave the United States courts jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases where the parties to the controversy were not both citizens of the Five Tribes, though where only Indian citizens were involved the tribal courts retained jurisdiction. By this time, however, the movement of whites into Indian Territory had become so great that pressure was constantly exerted on Congress to end the authority of the Indian courts and laws entirely, for the white residents were eager for the abolition of the tribal governments and the opening up of the territory to unrestricted settlement. In 1898 the tribal laws were indeed superseded and the laws of the United States and the State of Arkansas extended over all persons in Indian Territory, which thereupon came under the jurisdiction of the United States courts (except the Choctaw and Chickasaw). This effectively ended the self-governing character of the Seminole Nation, although the allotment of Seminole lands did not come until 1903.

The tribal government of the Seminole was organized on a white rather than a native pattern. As such, it was superimposed on the old society. Furthermore, the economic *raison d'être* of the national government lay outside the Indian social system, in that the salaries of the tribal officers and the funds for the maintenance of the tribal blacksmith shops and schools were drawn from interest payments on accounts held in trust for the Seminole by the United States government, these funds having been transferred to the Indians' account according to the terms of the treaty of 1866. Yet the national government became a prominent feature of Seminole society and no account of their social organization is complete without a brief outline of the essentials of the tribal system.

For several years after the Civil War, the northern and southern divisions of the tribe maintained separate organizations, each having its own council and head chief, though the chief of the northern division was acknowledged as principal chief in transactions between



the Seminole agent and the Nation (Com. Ind. Aff., 1869, p. 419). It was not long before the two divisions merged and a single tribal organization was formed. In its final form this consisted primarily of a principal chief, a second chief, a national council, and a company of lighthorsemen. The chief and second chief were elected for a four-year term by majority vote of all male citizens of age, while the council members were drawn from the fourteen towns of the Nation, each town being entitled to three representatives. Twelve of the towns were made up of Indians and two consisted entirely of Negro freedmen; the latter were full citizens of the Nation and entitled to all privileges of citizenship. The lighthorsemen, ten in number, enforced the laws of the Nation. A treasurer, superintendent of schools, and superintendent of blacksmith shops, maintained at tribal expense for the benefit of the people, completed the list of important officers.

The extreme paucity of documentary material makes it difficult to determine how the national government worked. One of the better accounts, by Colonel McKennon of the Dawes Commission, gives an interesting picture of conditions in the last years of the Nation, and is here included (McKennon, 1906, p. 2):

There are fourteen bands and consequently there are forty-two members of the general council. The body is presided over by a chairman, which it elects from its own number. The principal chief and second chief are always expected to be present in the meetings of the council, in which they exercise the right of debate but do not vote upon any question that is to be determined by vote of the council. All bills passed by the council are either approved or vetoed by the principal chief, and his approval of the judgment of the council in either civil or criminal cases, must be obtained before such judgment can be carried into execution.

The trials of all civil cases are conducted in the simplest manner possible. The parties appear before the council, each tells his story, and if either of them has witnesses these are examined. When this is done, the case is determined by a majority vote of the members of the council. Criminal trials are conducted in a like simple manner. The prisoner is brought before the council and is asked if he is guilty or not guilty. If he pleads guilty, the case is investigated in a limited manner by the council, generally taking the statement of the accused alone, but if there be any witnesses present with knowledge of the fact, they are heard, and then the guilt or innocence of the accused is determined by a majority vote of the council.

If the prisoner enters a plea of not guilty, his case is examined more critically, he is heard in his own behalf and is permitted to summon witnesses at the expense of the government. When the government and the accused have concluded their testimony, his guilt or innocence, as in other cases, is determined by a majority vote of the council. In no case is either the defendant or government represented by counsel.

If the accused is found guilty, the principal chief will either approve or disapprove the finding of the council. If he disapproves it the judgment cannot be executed, and the prisoner goes free. His disapproval is equivalent to the granting of a pardon. Indeed, he has the power, even after he has approved the judgment, to pardon the defendant at any time before the execution. If the judgment is approved by him, it is the usual custom to execute the sentence during the sitting of the council which tried the case.



Under the Seminole laws there are two capital offenses, homicide and larceny. For every other offense the culprit is punishable by whipping. For the first offense of larceny, the convict receives fifty lashes upon his bare back; for the second offense 100 lashes; for the third 150, and for the fourth the law imposes the death penalty by shooting. In no case, however, has this law been executed and a Seminole put to death for breach of it. In such case the council votes to determine whether the law shall be executed or the defendant pardoned, and in every instance the vote has resulted in a pardon. If after this, the pardoned man continues to steal he is punished in the degree and order above mentioned.

When a party was convicted of a capital offense and sentenced to be shot, the day was fixed for his execution, and certain members of the family of the deceased, nearest in blood to him, were deputized to prepare and load two guns with which the condemned was to be executed. These were on the morning of the execution and just before the shooting, placed in the hands of two lighthorsemen. Formerly the culprit was shot in the head, but in later years in the heart, the latter being deemed a more humane mode of execution. A leaf or piece of paper was pinned over the heart and just before the time to fire the chief placed a watch in the hand of an officer, ordinarily the captain of the lighthorse, which he held until the moment of the execution, when he gave the command, "now," and the shots were fired. If the guns failed to fire, the man went free.

Two further aspects of the Nation should be noted in passing. One is the size of the tribe, which at the time of allotment was counted at about 2,100 Indians. The other is the fact that neither individuals nor the Indian towns owned land; title to all Seminole land was held only by the Nation.

It remains to state the principal results of the development of the national government upon the native social organization. Briefly, the effects of this development were threefold. First, it gave the Seminole a tribal unity which they previously had not attained, with the possible exception of the cohesion they displayed during the Seminole Wars. Second, the national government assumed certain functions formerly assigned to other social groupings; thus the clan originally acted in cases of murder, but punishment for homicide became a matter for action by the tribal government. Apparently this transference tended to weaken somewhat the solidarity of the clan. Lastly, though the Seminole remained the most conservative of the Five Tribes, the support of schools by the national government stimulated the acculturation of the Indians and made for more rapid social change.

#### THE TOWN

The town (*tálwa*) formed an important local group prior to the establishment of the Nation and continued as such until allotment. In the memory of my informants there were fourteen towns represented on the tribal council of the Seminole Nation. Two of these towns or bands, as they are now called, consisted entirely of Negro

freedmen and the remaining twelve of Indians. The names of the Indian towns were as follows:

- |                  |                  |                |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. Hitchiti      | 5. Eufaula No. 2 | 9. Okfuski     |
| 2. Mikasuki      | 6. Eufaula No. 3 | 10. Talahasuci |
| 3. Chiaha        | 7. Liwahili      | 11. Fus Huci   |
| 4. Eufaula No. 1 | 8. Ocisi         | 12. Newcomers  |

Ideally speaking, a Seminole town consisted of a local group, which in addition to being a political subdivision of the Nation maintained its own ceremonial square ground where the town dances, ceremonies, and festivities were held. The towns comprising the list given above did not all conform to these criteria. The three Eufaula towns were apparently formed by the segmentation of one original group and continued to participate in ceremonies at a single square ground. Fus Huci was originally an old Creek town that migrated to Florida; after moving to Oklahoma it gave up its square ground and joined Liwahili, though apparently continuing to exist as a separate local group. I was told by Rina Coker, a very old Seminole who was born in Florida and who came west at the time of removal, that Newcomers town, to which she belonged, kept together for a short time but then scattered among the other towns and ceased to maintain a square ground.

Though the degree of cultural homogeneity was very high among the Seminole, two linguistic divisions were represented in the tribe. Hitchiti and Mikasuki towns spoke variant but mutually understandable dialects of the Hitchiti language; the remainder spoke Muskogee proper. The difference in language resulted in a certain social barrier between Hitchiti and Mikasuki on one hand and the other towns on the other, for Muskogee and Hitchiti are mutually unintelligible. Hitchiti town and Mikasuki are said to have visited each other more than the remaining towns, and though Hitchiti was on very friendly terms with Chiaha, its neighbor to the north, the Mikasukis are reported to have kept mostly within their own linguistic division.

The size of the Seminole towns varied greatly. It is very difficult to get accurate estimates, but at the close of the century Hitchiti was reported to number barely a dozen families—a mere hamlet—whereas Mikasuki was said to count well over a hundred. This variation in size may have affected the degree of compactness of local settlements, though the pattern of house distribution was apparently much the same. Each household possessed its own cabin and cultivated its own fields. The placing of the former was directly

related to the available water supply, so that a typical settlement was built along the low ridges flanking one of the numerous small creeks in the region. The houses might be anywhere from fifty to several hundred yards or more apart; apparently the settlement tended to spread in later times, so that in spatial terms the community exhibited a loose grouping of houses extending along a water-course. The fields were likewise scattered, with single areas of cultivation rarely exceeding five acres, and more usually consisting of only one or two. The land in the Nation was of very unequal quality, and the Seminole tended to utilize the small areas of bottom land; consequently the fields of a family might be a half mile or more distant from its cabin. The distribution of houses and fields indicates that in spatial terms the town was actually a loosely gathered settlement, which spread even more in the later years of the Nation.

Socially, however, the local group was a more compact unit. In the late spring and summer, particularly at the time of the Green Corn Dances and the tribal council meetings, there was considerable mingling of people from up and down the Nation. Also, the men had a wider range of social contacts than the women. But for the most, according to my old informants, the members of a town kept largely to themselves. Marriages were said to have been contracted mainly within the local group. In case an outside marriage took place, the man or the woman left his or her town to take residence in that of the spouse as dictated by circumstances. In either instance, change of residence theoretically did not result in change of town affiliation, the absentee retaining his or her membership in the town of birth. Children of such a couple were supposed to belong to the town of the mother, though changes in town affiliation did occur.

The division of Seminole towns into "white" and "red" early lost its significance. It continued to determine the sides for the inter-town ball games, but these were relatively infrequent; the Seminole were much less given to such games than the Creeks. Also, in the Green Corn Dance a town would send special invitations to other towns of the same division or "fire," though all were free to attend. But aside from this I could discover no other functions of the white-red division. There was apparently no great feeling of solidarity among towns of the same "fire," nor of opposition to those of the opposite "fire." Propinquity became of greater importance than the old dual division. The northernmost town in the Nation, Chiaha, and the southernmost, Liwahili, never cared greatly

for each other though they belong to the same "fire," and in the old days there was considerable political rivalry, especially in the election of tribal chiefs, between the southern and northern districts of the Nation. The two northernmost towns, Chiaha and Hitchiti, seem always to have been on friendly terms, and when Hitchiti gave up its square ground the non-Christians danced at Chiaha, though the two towns are on opposite sides of the dual division. Inasmuch as one would expect this division to be particularly important in such ceremonial matters, one can infer that it had lost a great deal of its importance to the Seminole.

#### THE CLAN

The Seminole were divided into matrilineal, exogamous clans. A list of these is given below:

- |            |              |                         |                       |
|------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Bear    | 8. Alligator | 15. Turkey              | 22. Pumpkin           |
| 2. Deer    | 9. Bird      | 16. <i>Kapicálki</i>    | 23. Salt              |
| 3. Panther | 10. Potato   | 17. <i>Aktayahcálki</i> | 24. Buzzard           |
| 4. Snake   | 11. Wind     | 18. <i>Waksálki</i>     | 25. Fox               |
| 5. Wolf    | 12. Grass    | 19. Otter               | 26. Eagle             |
| 6. Coon    | 13. Skunk    | 20. Toad                | 27. <i>Tamálki</i>    |
| 7. Beaver  | 14. Mole     | 21. Earth               | 28. <i>Nokfilálki</i> |

All these clan names appear on Swanton's list (Swanton, 1928, pp. 115-117). There may well have been other clans which became extinct and which my informants could not remember. I was told that when a clan came to consist of only one or two families it was generally incorporated into a more flourishing one. Actually only twelve or fifteen of the clans on the list above were at all numerous. Even these were of unequal size, while I am even doubtful of the existence of several of the others, as they preserved only a tenuous existence in the memory of my older informants. Also, it should be noted that the number of members and the importance of a clan varied from town to town; thus there were so many Potatoes at Chiaha that it was familiarly known as "Potato-town," and at Hitchiti the largest clan was said to be the Deer, and at Fus Huci the Bear.

Within each town the clans were divided according to a dual division, one side being *hata-ka* ("white") and the other *cilo-ko* ("different speech") (Swanton, 1928, p. 157). This moiety arrangement, even more than the dual division of towns, seems to have lost its significance at an early date. For the intra-town ball games between the clans on opposite sides of the division, which usually involved unequal sides, there was substituted an arbitrary "east-west" division of players, a method borrowed from the Creeks.

Other than its use in these ball games, I did not discover any other function of the clan moiety.

At the time the Seminole were moved to Oklahoma the clans were also linked into phratral groups. The character and social function of the latter are not clear and I have little to add to Swanton's material. Fortunately, the phratry is still a functioning group in Florida and I expended my effort there rather than in attempting to gather vague facts regarding the phratry from the memories of the Oklahoma Seminole. A quotation from Swanton (1928, p. 121) covers the Oklahoma situation:

Clans were linked into phratries in various ways. Many were small and were considered merely as minor branches of some large clan; others were co-ordinate in size and importance, though not necessarily of equal importance in every town. Some appear to have been almost entirely confined to certain villages, while others were represented nearly everywhere. Still more remarkable is the fact, hardly paralleled elsewhere, that the very same clans were often linked into a phratry in some towns and separated in others, sometimes even linked with different clans.

In the opinion of informants the phratries formed exogamous groups, exogamy later shifting to the individual clans as the phratry organization disintegrated. The clans comprising a phratry were considered kin, with each group having an *amacoli* clan (one that was an "elder," either "uncle" or "older brother") (cf. Haas, 1939, pp. 597-610). However, on two occasions I was told that the clans forming a phratry were "related" only until noon, and that after mid-day they were no longer kin and their members could intermarry; this sounds very much like a rationalization following the breakdown of phratry exogamy, though it may also indicate that phratry exogamy was never complete.

Although the clan lost to the Nation some of its functions, such as punishment for murder, and gradually became impotent, for a number of years it continued to be of fundamental importance. Members of the same clan could not marry, regardless of town affiliation, while the clan continued to function in the education of children and young people, in promoting and maintaining marriages, in the punishment for incest and adultery, as a basis underlying behavior patterns among kin, in the ownership and inheritance of property, and in ritual and ceremony. These facets of the clan organization will be discussed in the following pages.

#### THE HOUSEHOLD

The households formed the component units of a Seminole town. They were individual food-producing and consuming groups, each

consisting of a man and his wife, their children, occasionally some old people, and perhaps for a temporary period the husband of a newly married daughter. The composition of the household was thus centered around a single elementary family. In Florida today the household is an extended family group whose core consists of a matrilineal lineage; assuming that the Florida situation represents an older condition formerly obtaining among all Seminole, it follows that among the Oklahoma division the extended family has broken down into elementary family groups. The change apparently was an early one, for my informants did not remember it, though a clue to the former condition is found in the use of a word *cokohamí-ca* ("family of one house"), to designate a matrilineal lineage. The oldest woman of the lineage was head of the lineage; men remained in the *cokohamí-ca* even when they married, though their wives and children belonged to a different *cokohamí-ca*. Also, it should be noted that a man used the word *ihóti* ("home") only for the home of his sister (formerly by extension of the kinship system this included the homes of all women called "sister"). His actual residence he called *inleykitá* ("place of dwelling").

The household group lived in a simple log cabin, a few of which had an outhouse or two nearby to store the winter supply of food. Adjacent to the cabin was an open-sided, flat-topped arbor that served as adequate shelter during the summer months, and under this the family spent considerable time during the warmer season. Near every house stood a heavy wooden mortar and pestle, the constant companion of the housewife and one element of material culture that has hung on tenaciously to the present day. In the small clearing surrounding the house there was also to be seen an open fireplace and next to it a large iron pot for making soap and washing clothes.

Within the family group there was a distinct division of labor between men and women. The former did the heavy work of splitting rails, cutting wood, making and mending fences, clearing fields, ploughing, building the log houses, and improving the few roads that ran through the Nation. In their new environment in Oklahoma, the men continued to spend a large amount of time hunting, particularly during the fall, when parties would venture out in search of deer to provide meat for the winter. During the cold months and at odd times throughout the year the men went after smaller game such as wild turkey, coons, and rabbits, while the well-stocked streams provided a welcome addition of fresh fish. As the game was gradually exterminated, the men spent a proportionately larger

time loafing, though caring for the domestic stock became a partial substitute for hunting, each family generally possessing some hogs, a few chickens, and a number of horses and cattle. The hogs and cattle ran on open range, though there were some fenced pastures. With some exceptions the men never became interested in farming, beyond supplying their immediate needs. In this respect the Indians have proved less adaptable than the Negro freedmen, who are still predominantly rural and who have made some success at agriculture.

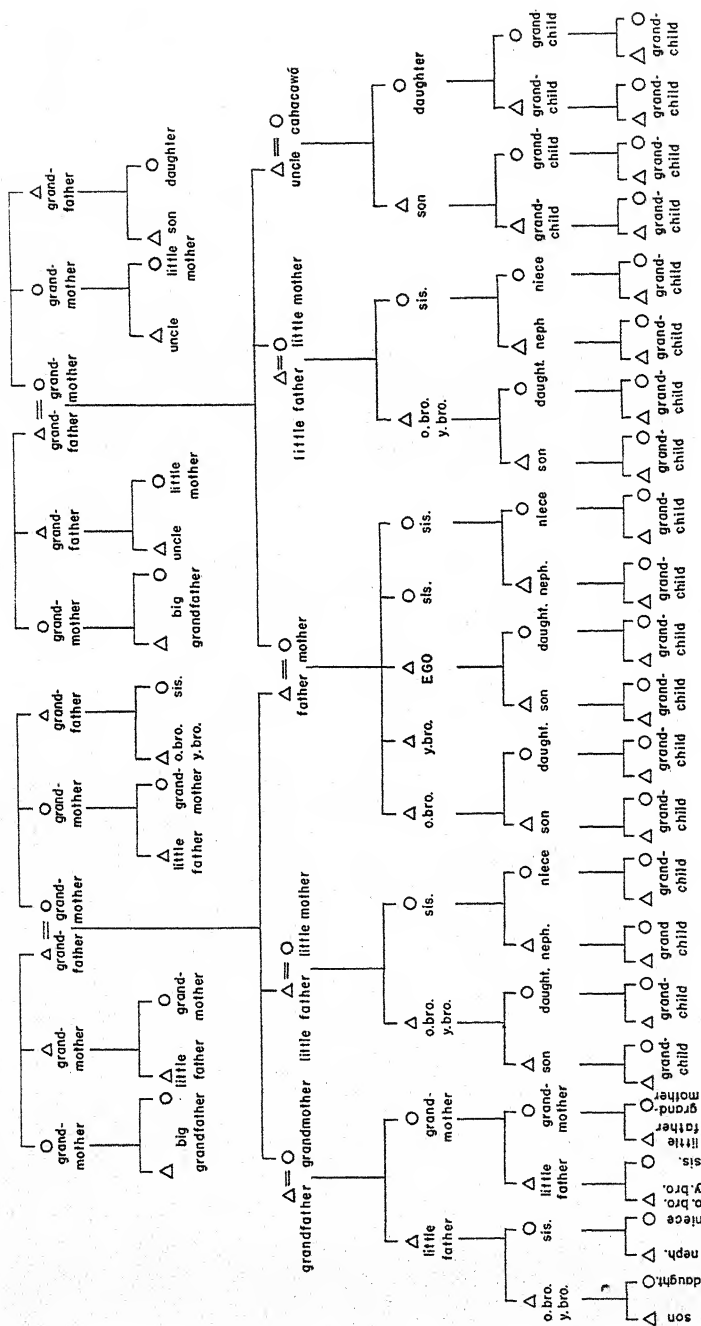
To the women fell the task of cultivating the small fields, of grinding corn and preparing all the food, of taking care of the house and looking after the small children, and, in the early days, of making a certain amount of clothing from the skins of animals brought in by the men. Pottery-making and weaving disappeared at an early date and were well on the decline before the removal of the Seminole to Oklahoma. Nowadays the Indians are almost devoid of handicrafts, though the women make a considerable number of quilts and do a little bead-work.

### KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

#### THE TERMINOLOGICAL SYSTEM

The terminology of kinship is given in the accompanying charts (Figs. 2-5) and table. The system was a logical and consistent one, and though it is greatly restricted in its range at the present time, the application of terms has not changed from the pattern shown. The Seminole system conformed to a Crow type, with all descendants of the father's sister through females classed as "little fathers" and "grandmothers," irrespective of generation differences. The mother's brother's children were classed with the generation below as "sons" and "daughters." A distinction between real and classificatory parents was made by adding a diminutive to the stem of the term for "father" or "mother." Children of "little fathers" were always classed as siblings. Both men and women separated older and younger siblings of the same sex, but grouped those of opposite sex under one term. Grandparents on both mother's and father's side were grouped under two terms, "grandfather" and "grandmother," which could also be applied to any old person of the second ascending generation as a mark of respect. There was one term for "grandchild." A man classed his wife's sister, brother's wife, mother's brother's wife, and sister's son's wife under a single term.









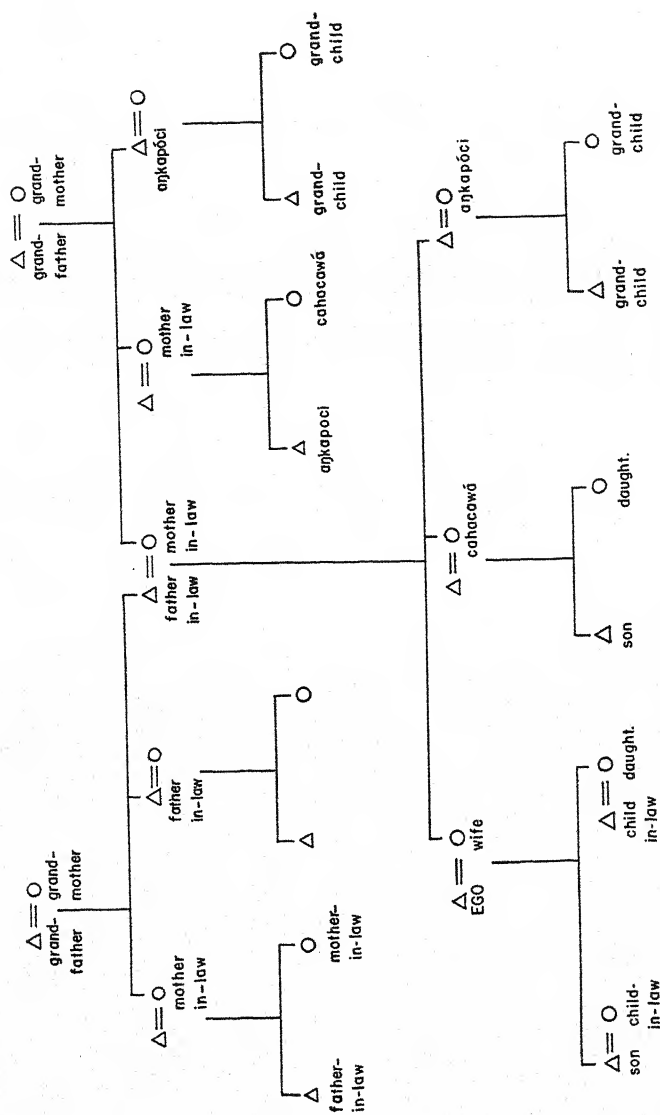


FIG. 4. Oklahoma Seminole affinal structure. Ego is male.

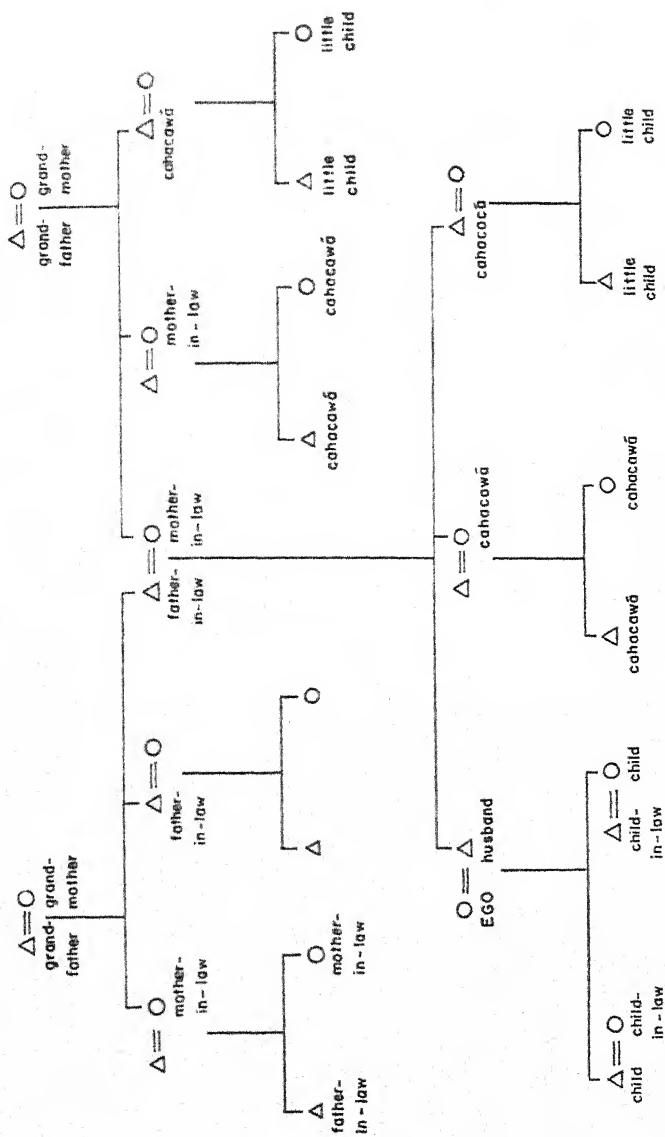


FIG. 5. Oklahoma Seminole affinal structure. Ego is female.

Certain supplementary terms were to be found in common usage and are listed below:

*iiicá-kkiya-i*. This was a covering term for sibling and referred to either a brother or a sister, real or classificatory, and irrespective of sex.

*anci-pá-na-i*. This term was sometimes used by a man to denote a classificatory rather than a real son, though there was some variation in usage with different individuals. My interpreter, Wesley Tanyan, always used this term in referring to a classificatory son. The term was also used in a more general sense to mean "boy."

*amacolí*. (pl., *amacoláki*). "Elder" is the closest English equivalent. The word was further restricted in usage to an older man in ego's clan. When a man spoke of *amacoláki*, he was referring to his clan elders, who in former times were an extremely influential group. The word was thus an alternative for "uncle" and was often used in this way. It also had other meanings in different contexts. A man making a speech, for instance, might stress the importance of following the tried and true ways of the forefathers of the Seminole. For "forefather," however, he would use *amacoláki*, meaning the deceased elders of all the Seminole clans.

*cana-hámki*. This referred to "one of my own clan."

*caséyca*. An archaic term used as an alternative for "little father." The term is in common use in Florida today.

#### SEMINOLE (MUSKOGEE) KINSHIP TERMS

ENGLISH TERM	SEMINOLE TERM
<i>Man speaking:</i>	
father .....	<i>cáiki</i>
mother .....	<i>cácki</i>
little father .....	<i>catkoci</i>
little mother .....	<i>cackoci</i>
grandfather .....	<i>capocá</i>
grandmother .....	<i>capósi</i>
big grandfather .....	<i>capoca-lásko</i>
uncle .....	<i>capáwa</i>
older brother .....	<i>catáha</i>
younger brother .....	<i>cacósi</i>
sister .....	<i>ca-wámwa</i>
son .....	<i>cappoci</i>
daughter .....	<i>caccósti</i>
nephew .....	<i>anhopóywa</i>
niece .....	<i>anhakpatí</i>
grandchild .....	<i>amosóswa</i>
wife .....	<i>cahéywa</i>
sister-in-law .....	<i>cahacawá</i>
brother-in-law (wife's brother) .....	<i>anjapóci</i>
brother-in-law (sister's husband) .....	<i>ancokowákki</i>
father-in-law .....	<i>ammá-hi</i>
mother-in-law .....	<i>anhoktálwa</i>
child-in-law .....	<i>anhatisi</i>
<i>Woman speaking:</i>	
brother .....	<i>cacítwa</i>
older sister .....	<i>catáha</i>
younger sister .....	<i>cacósi</i>
child .....	<i>caccóswa</i>
little child .....	<i>caccosóci</i>
husband .....	<i>cáhi</i>

## VOCATIVE TERMS

With the exceptions noted below, my informants gave me the same forms for the vocative as the non-vocative terms, except that they tended to omit the possessive prefix in the case of the former. The exceptions are:

father: *anta-ta* or *ta-ta*  
"little father": *anta-to-ci* or *ta-to-ci*  
mother: *amwa-ci* or *wa-ci*  
"little mother": *amwa-co-ci*

The use of these terms in direct address is interesting, as they correspond to the non-vocative forms in Hitchiti (Mikasuki and Hitchiti towns spoke Hitchiti rather than Muskogee proper). Actually however, most of my informants used *má-ma*<sup>2</sup> (from English) for mother and added a Muskogee diminutive for "little mother," thus forming the term *má-moci*<sup>2</sup>. The native vocative term for father has hung on more persistently, though today children use *pá-pa*<sup>2</sup> (from English) and add the Muskogee diminutive for the father's brother to form the term *pá-poci*<sup>2</sup>. On the whole, I believe the older use of Hitchiti terms and the more recent use of English terms as vocative forms indicate that the vocative terminology is more sensitive to foreign influences and more susceptible to change than is the referential terminology.

Certain other vocative terms should be noted. *Anci-pá-na-t* and *anhoktí* or *anhoktoci* were generally used for boys and young men and for girls and young women respectively. The term *amacó-la-t* was commonly applied to older male relatives and also to old men not related. Spouses never used the referential terms in direct address; instead each called the other *ampálsi*, or the man called his wife *anhoktá-la-t* and she called him *amacó-la-t*.

Personal names were not used in direct address, except for the "house names" of children.

## RANGE OF THE TERMINOLOGICAL SYSTEM

In describing the range of relatives covered by the kinship terminology, I shall resort to a series of diagrams (pp. 62-71), as the extensions of the kinship terms were for the most part based squarely on the clan and lend themselves to diagrammatic description. Though diagrams sometimes complicate rather than simplify the exposition of a subject, I believe that in the present case they are useful in making clear the extension of Seminole kinship terms.

## EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 6

Figure 6 shows the extension of terms to the members of ego's clan, all of whom were considered kin. The clan membership is represented by the rectangle enclosed by solid black lines; this area is divided vertically on the basis of sex and horizontally on that of generation. The areas enclosed by dotted lines at the left and right sides of the rectangle represent persons (other than ego's wife and her kin) married to members of ego's clan and hence related to him through clan-mates.

We may first consider in detail the members of ego's clan. All males of the same generation were either "older brothers" or "younger brothers," while all females of this generation were classed together as "sisters." In the first ascending generation the men were all "uncles" and the women "little mothers," except that ego omitted the diminutive in speaking of his own mother. The old people of the second ascending generation were either "grandfathers" or "grandmothers." The "uncles" and "grandfathers" together formed ego's clan elders (*amacoláki*). In the first descending generation the males were "nephews" and the females "nieces," while in the second descending generation all were "grandchildren."

In this classification the distinction between generations received full recognition. Likewise, the sex difference was used as a criterion throughout, except for the second descending generation, where both sexes were grouped together under a single term. With this latter exception sex and generation were both given the fullest possible expression in the terminological classification of ego's clan kin.

There remains the body of kinfolk to whom ego traced a relationship by virtue of their having married members of his clan. Anyone married to any person in ego's clan fell in this category. In the diagram I have shown these kin as a sort of appendage to ego's clan, which is precisely what they were. As the clan was a strictly exogamous unit, these latter came from various of the other different clans represented in the tribe. Women married to ego's clan "uncles," "brothers," and "nephews" were all classed as *cahacawá*, the nearest English equivalent being "sister-in-law." Under the working of the levirate all these *cahacawá* were potential spouses, kinship terminology thus being closely adjusted to a type of prescribed marriage. The wives of clan "grandfathers" were all "grandmothers," and likewise the husbands of all clan "grandmothers" were called "grandfathers." In the first ascending generation the husbands of "little mothers" were always "little fathers." The husband of a "sister" or a "niece" was called *ancokowákki* ("he who sleeps in my house"), while the spouse of a grandchild was referred to as *anhatisi*, the same term that was used for child-in-law.

Although ego recognized a relationship to persons married to members of his own clan, he did not extend such recognition to any kinfolk of these persons. Thus the mother's brother's wife fell within the range of the terminology, but her kin did not. At this point the limit of the range of the terminological system was reached and a whole body of possible affinal relatives excluded from the system. It is largely for this reason that men and women attached by marriage to ego's clan appear as kinship appendages to the clan.



		female	male	female	male	
EGO'S clan	cohacawā	grand-mother	grand-father	grand-mother	grand-father	2nd ascending generation
			uncle	little mother	little father	1st ascending generation
			o. bro. y. bro.	sis.		EGO'S generation (EGO is male)
			neph.	niece		1st descending generation
			grandchild			2nd descending generation
		child-in-law			child-in-law	

FIG. 6. Oklahoma Seminole kinship extensions.

## EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 7

Figure 7 carries the analysis a step further to include two additional groups of kin. The first comprised the father's clan, all of whom fell within the range of the system. All men of this clan were "little fathers," except that ego did not use the diminutive form for his own father. All women of the father's clan were "grandmothers." The wives of the men of the father's clan were "little mothers," and the husbands of the women were "grandfathers." As in the case of ego's clan, the system did not include the kinfolk of persons married to members of the father's clan.

The second group consisted of persons whose fathers belonged to the same clan as did ego's father. All persons whose fathers belonged to the same clan were siblings and called one another "brother" or "sister." For example, all offspring of men of the Bear clan were looked on as Bear "children." The "children" naturally belonged to different clans, but because the fathers were of one clan the children were "brothers and sisters" (*itica-kkiya-t*). Likewise, the spouses of these brothers and sisters were either *cahacawá* or *ancokowákki*, depending on their sex, while the terminology did not extend to the kin of these latter.

With these two groups of kin it is obvious that the basis of classification was sex and that generation was disregarded. The statement requires some modification, in that a generation distinction did creep in with the use of "grandfather" and "grandmother" as possible alternative terms to express respect for any old person of the second ascending generation. This has been omitted in Figure 7. How frequent the usage was I do not know, though in Figure 2 I have designated the father's mother's brother as "grandfather." This is certainly correct, and I suspect there may have been some slight difference in usage for direct blood relations and classificatory kin. In any case the use of the grandfather and grandmother terms in this way introduces some qualification to the statement that sex rather than generation formed the basis of terminological classification of the two groups here examined. However, a man referred collectively to the men of his father's clan as my "fathers," and to other "children" of his father's clan as my "siblings," regardless of age differences.



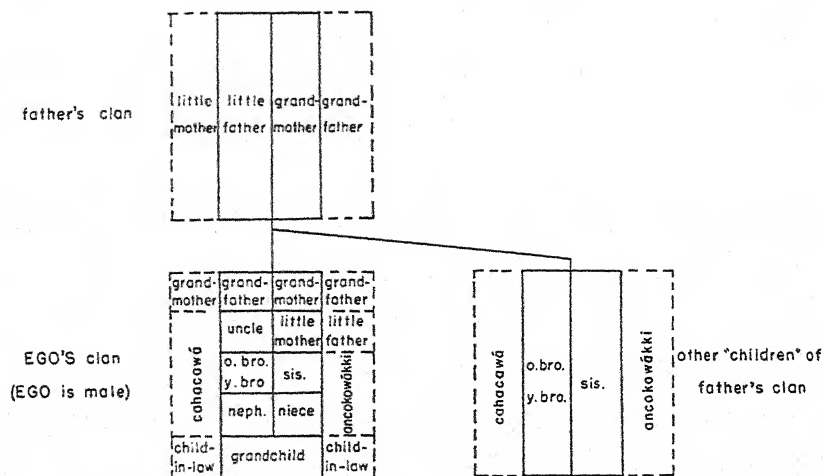


FIG. 7. Oklahoma Seminole kinship extensions.

#### EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 8

The next two groups to be considered are the clans of the father's father and the mother's father. In Figure 8 I have grouped them together, as the same terminology was extended to both these bodies of kin. The father's father, the mother's father and their blood brothers were called *capocá* ("grandfather") and their sisters *capósi* ("grandmother"), but the remaining members of the two clans were called *capoca-lákko* ("big grandfather"), regardless of sex or age. Thus, both the sex and generation criteria were ignored and the character of the genealogical relationship between ego and these two clan groups became the sole basis for terminological classification. The spouses of *capoca-lákko* were called either "grandfather" or "grandmother," depending on their sex; their kinfolk did not come within the range of the system.

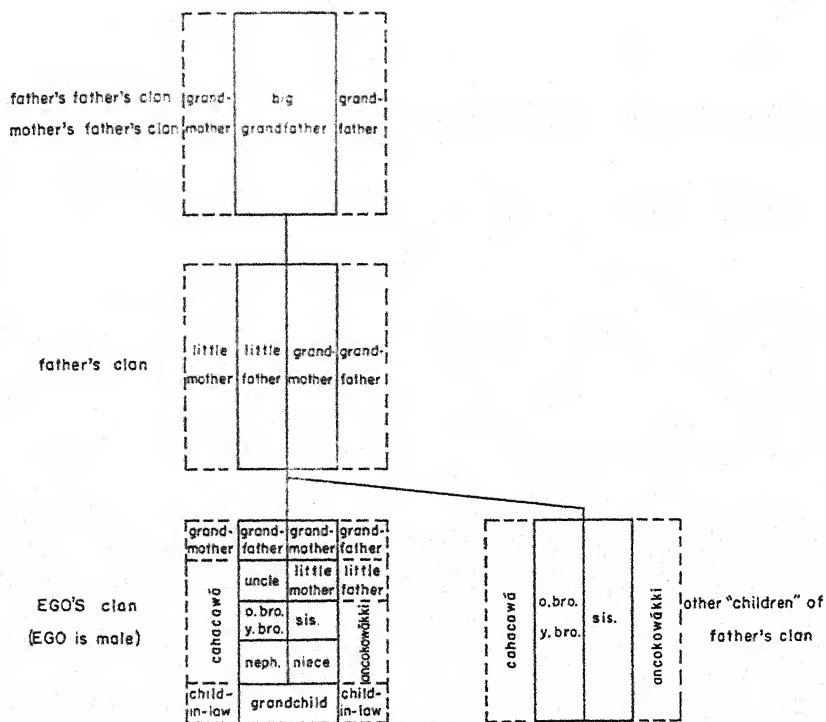


FIG. 8. Oklahoma Seminole kinship extensions.

### EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 9

Figure 9 extends the analysis downward. The first group comprises all persons whose fathers belonged to ego's clan. Such people were known as the "children" of ego's clan and were called either "sons" or "daughters." As in the case of the father's clan, the statement needs qualification. Examination of the genealogical chart (Fig. 2) shows that the children of those "nephews" belonging to ego's clan were called "grandchild." The latter in turn called ego "grandfather." Where an actual genealogical relation could not be determined, I gained the impression that this usage was an alternative to that shown in the diagram. In any case, all those whose fathers belonged to ego's clan were known collectively as the clan "sons" and "daughters." The spouses of these were all classed together as "children-in-law"; their kinfolk were not included within the range of the system.

The second group were the "grandchildren" of ego's clan, that is, all those whose father's father or mother's father belonged to ego's clan. No distinction of sex or generation was made and all were referred to as "grandchildren." Their spouses were "children-in-law"; the kin of these fell outside the range of the system.

Old individuals of the second ascending generation in both these groups might also be called "grandfather" or "grandmother" as a mark of respect.

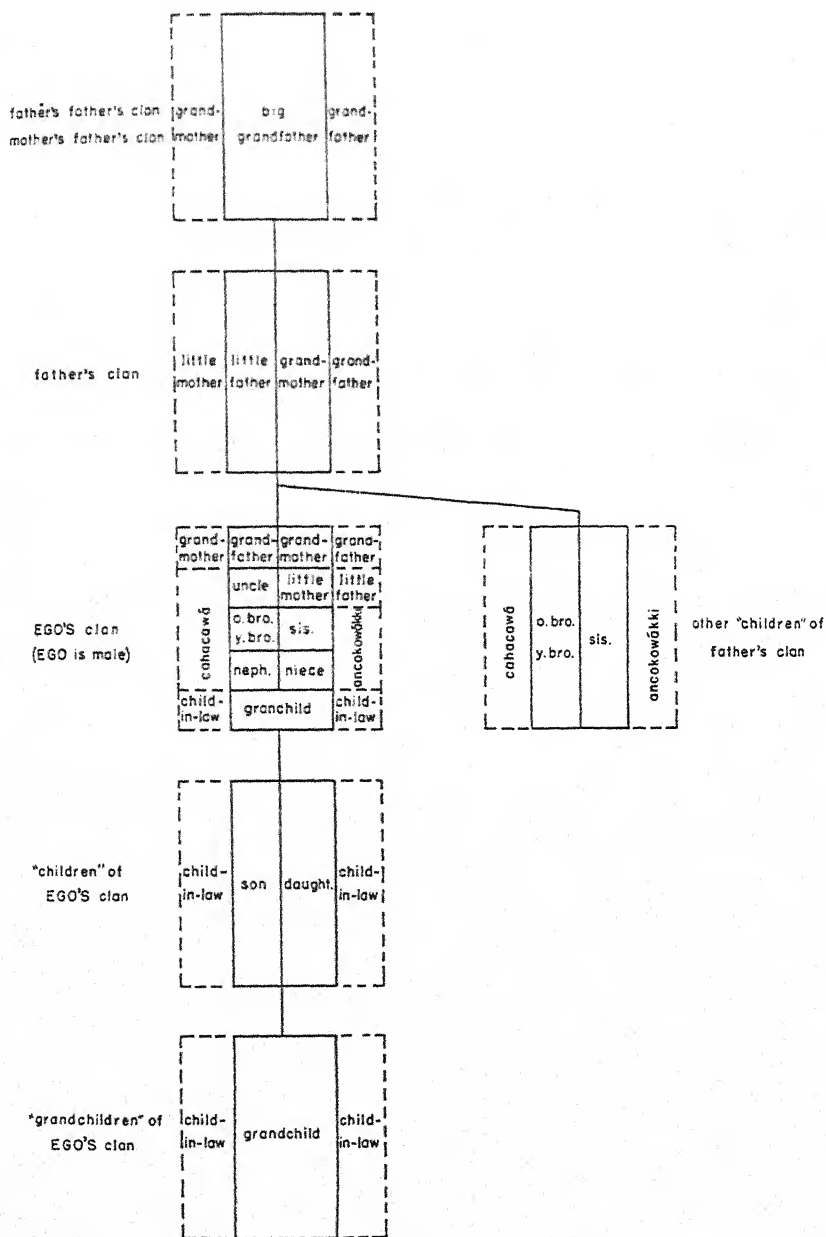


FIG. 9. Oklahoma Seminole kinship extensions.

#### EXPLANATION OF FIGURE 10

Figure 10 shows the same schematic classification of kin as Figure 9, except that ego is female. Women made a sibling distinction consistent with the difference in sex. They also classed together all children of clan sisters as "little child," while the children of clan brothers were referred to as "grandchildren."

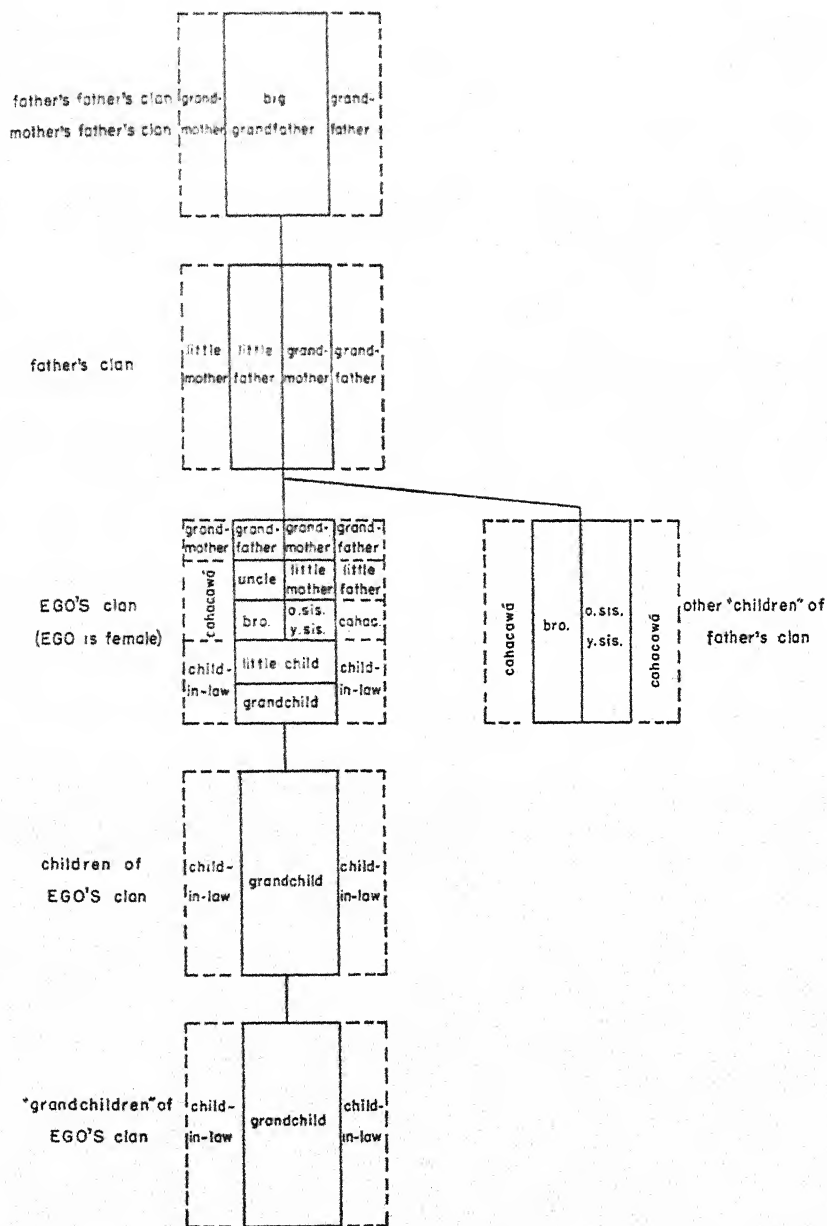


Fig. 10. Oklahoma Seminole kinship extensions.

Certain relatives falling within the range of the terminology have not been included in the foregoing diagrams (Figs. 6-10). These relatives are:

1. Children of the father's father's clan brothers and the mother's father's clan brothers.
2. Descendants of those "brothers" and "sisters" not belonging to ego's clan.
3. Great-grandchildren of clan "uncles."

I am frankly doubtful as to the social importance of relations of the above classes of persons. Where an actual genealogical relationship could be traced, the kinship tie was probably of more consequence than when no such blood bond was to be ascertained. In any case, most of the relatives noted fell toward the peripheries of the range of the terminological system and were brought within the limits of the system simply by the logical extension of the terminology. The groups of kin who, in the minds of my informants, were of real social importance are those shown in the diagrams.

We may next consider the extension of kinship terms to the relatives of the spouse.

#### A. When ego was male, the extension was as follows:

*Wife's clan.* The wife's sisters and all women of her age were *cahacawá*. The wife's brothers and uncles were all *an̄kapóci*. The wife's mother and all women of her age were "mothers-in-law" (*anhoktálwa*). Old people of the second ascending generation were "grandfather" and "grandmother." The children of *cahacawá* were "sons" and "daughters," and children of the latter were "grandchildren."

*Wife's father's clan.* All men were "father-in-law" (*ammá-hi*) and all women were "mother-in-law," except that very old people could also be called "grandfather" or "grandmother."

"Children" of *wife's clan*. These included all those whose fathers belonged to the wife's clan. These persons were all "grandchildren."

#### B. When ego was female, the extension was as follows:

*Husband's clan.* The husband's sisters and all women of her age, the husband's brothers and all men of his age, and the husband's clan "uncles," "nephews," and "nieces" were all called *cahacawá*. The husband's mother and all women of her age were "mothers-in-law" (*anhoktálwa*). Old people were "grandfather" or "grandmother"; those of the second descending generation were "grandchildren."

*Husband's father's clan.* All men were "father-in-law" (*ammá-hi*) and all women were "mother-in-law," except that very old people could also be called "grandfather" or "grandmother."

"Children" of *husband's clan*. These included all those whose fathers belonged to the husband's clan. These persons were all "little child."



## KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY AND THE TOWN

The kinship terminology was theoretically not restricted by town affiliation. If I belonged to the Bear clan and lived in Mikasuki town, men in the Bear clan at Liwahili who were my own age were my "brothers" and older men my "uncles." Consequently, when two strangers from different towns met, one of the first subjects discussed was the clan affiliation of each, or of their fathers, or, if no relation was forthcoming, of their fathers' fathers or mothers' fathers. In such situations, where the range of the terminology was tested, recourse was generally had to clan affiliation in an attempt to find a common bond.

## PRINCIPLES OF TERMINOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION

Certain principles of classification were embodied in the terminological structure of the Seminole kinship system. The more important of these are as follows:

*Merging of lineal and collateral relatives.*—The Seminole system was classificatory in its merging of the father and his brothers on one hand and of the mother and her sisters on the other. A distinction was made, however, between real and classificatory parents by the use of the diminutive for the latter. Also, a woman used the diminutive to distinguish her classificatory from her real children.

*Reciprocity.*—The use of identical terms occurred only between those affinal kin calling each other *cahacawá*. Otherwise, identical terms between relatives were not used. Each term, however, had its complementary reciprocal, thereby giving expression to a series of paired relationships and imparting to the kinship system a definite logic and consistency. The significance of these relationships will be elucidated further in the discussion of kinship behavior.

*The lineage principle.*—To a large extent the Seminole kinship system was built on the recognition of lineage as an organizing principle. With consanguineal kin four lineages were recognized: the mother's lineage, which was also that of ego, the father's lineage, the father's father's lineage, and the mother's father's lineage. The terminology for the father's father's and mother's father's lineages was identical. The manner of classifying the relatives of each of these four lineages was expanded to include all the members of their respective clans. Thus the clan became a basic feature of the system, a fact which I have attempted to bring out in diagrammatic fashion in Figures 6-10. From these diagrams it is apparent that terminological classification coincided with clan lines for ego's clan and

for his father's, father's father's, and mother's father's clans. For other consanguineal relatives the classification over-rode clan lines in that persons from different clans were grouped together. This did not mean that the relation between terminology and the clan broke down, however—far from it. It was merely that to determine the classification of relatives in his mother's, father's, father's father's, and mother's father's clans ego relied on *his* clan relation to them, while for the other consanguineal kin he relied on *their* relation to the four clans named. The clan remained as a fundamental—and in actual practice a very convenient—means of classifying relatives.

*Sex and generation.*—Again I shall refer to Figures 9 and 10. Beginning with ego's clan, we see that with the exception of the second descending generation when ego was male and of both first and second descending generations when ego was female, sex was given the fullest possible recognition in classifying relatives. Generation differences were accorded even greater recognition, five different generations being distinguished, with separate terms for older and younger siblings of the same sex in addition. It is with ego's clan that the division on the basis of age and sex was carried furthest.

With (1) the father's clan, (2) classificatory siblings whose fathers belonged to ego's father's clan, and (3) "children" of ego's clan, the generation criterion virtually dropped out and sex became the chief basis of classification, except for the possible alternative use of grandparent-grandchild terms in relationships demanding respect for age.

With the father's father's and mother's father's clans sex was disregarded except for the use of "grandfather" and "grandmother" for the grandparents and their own brothers and sisters; generation was also ignored, even though the term used for all members of these clans ("big grandfather") was derived from a generational context. Likewise the "grandchildren" of ego's clan were all called "grandchild" though they might have been of either sex or any age. Therefore, as we pass upward, downward, and outward from ego's clan we find that first generation and then sex were given less complete expression as criteria for classification. On the other hand, lineage tended relatively to enter more strongly, with the consequent overriding of generation that is the prominent feature of Omaha and Crow type systems. The same thing was true of the classification of the spouse's relatives.

## KINSHIP BEHAVIOR

In outlining the kinship behavior of the Oklahoma Seminole, I have emphasized the categories of respect and familiarity. However, I have attempted to qualify these terms in referring to specific relations in order to avoid forcing the description into unnatural channels. Though I feel that it is very doubtful that the respect-familiarity continuum is an adequate device for describing the varieties of kinship behavior, its utility has been demonstrated and in the present study it has proven of value.

The following description is also weighted in favor of formalized patterns of behavior. These patterns were explicit in the native mind and have consequently survived in native memory, while a number of them may be observed in weakened form today. The informal and more amorphous type of kinship behavior is difficult enough to describe when actually observed, but is much more so when only bits and snatches of it can be grasped through conversation with elderly informants. In the following discussion I have indicated those relations for which I did not obtain conclusive evidence as to the type of behavior involved.

## THE FAMILY

*Siblings.*—Between children of the same parents the relation was one of informality and lack of constraint, subject to differences of sex and age. Brothers joked with each other and sisters might joke among themselves, but this familiarity was restrained between brothers and sisters. Brothers and sisters did not joke with each other on sexual matters or on those with an obscene reference. After reaching the age of eight or ten years, children of opposite sex tended to keep to themselves and there was a gradual decrease in the extent to which the two sexes tended to associate with one another. Boys and girls began at this time to learn the tasks of adulthood and as these were generally taught them by members of their own sex, the decrease in contact was related to the sexual division of labor. The difference of age affected the relations of siblings in that on occasion a younger brother was expected to obey his older brother and a younger sister her older sister; thus, when the parents were not with them, the older children were made responsible for the safety and conduct of the younger ones and a certain amount of respect was consequently demanded of a younger sibling toward an older one. Maintenance of this respect in adult years apparently depended on the personality of the older sibling.

*Parents-children.*—Children were supposed to respect and obey their parents. This was particularly true of the father, to whom a son or daughter observed conduct of strictest respect with an absolute prohibition on joking. In the intimacy of his home, a father on rare occasions might mildly tease his children, but very infrequently. The character of this relation was not altered as the children reached maturity, but obtained throughout the lifetime of the persons concerned.

A child was not supposed to tease, make fun of, or joke with his or her mother. To do so indicated a lack of respect, and a child's behavior toward the mother fell into the respect category. The avoidance of familiarity continued after the child had grown to adulthood. A mother, on the other hand, was free to tease her children. A favorite form of joking on the part of the mother toward her son was, "I'll give you my grandmother [a woman of her father's clan] to marry," after the boy had finished some small task for her. Or she would call him "grandfather," implying that he already had married a woman in her father's clan.

Within the family it was the father's business to take care of the boys, the mother's to look after the girls. However, young children were generally under the mother's care. They were early taught the essentials of good manners, such as not interfering in the discussions of adults and leaving the presence of their parents when visitors came to call. On the whole, the upbringing of children was rather strict. Though the mother might punish young children by an occasional use of a switch, the father never attempted any form of punishment. The enforcement of discipline was fundamentally in the hands of the mother's brother.

*Husband-wife.*—The behavior between spouses depended largely on their respective personalities. Each had his or her duties to perform according to the traditional division of labor. They were expected to take care of each other and of their children. When a husband had male visitors, the wife generally left them to themselves; if she were present she reserved whatever opinion she might have on a subject under discussion until the men had expressed themselves. Men and women seldom ate together, the men eating first and the women afterwards.

*The mother's brother and the sister's children.*—After a brother and his sister reached maturity, married, and established families of their own, the relationship between them nevertheless continued as a very close one. The settlements were small and the families

comprising it were easily accessible to one another. A brother considered his sister's house "just like his own." He might come and stay for a day or so, do odd jobs about the house, and help his sister in various ways, at the same time expecting that he would be fed. Furthermore, to the mother's brother fell the task of disciplining his sister's children and of impressing on them the importance of proper conduct and behavior. Punishment was by scratching the forearms and legs with a needle. In this the father had no part and it was the mother's brother who scratched disobedient and wayward children. The attitude of the sister's children toward the mother's brother was one of considerable respect. One did not joke with his mother's brother or indulge in any familiarity that might bring a scratch in its wake. On the contrary, a boy or a girl was usually "a little afraid of *capawa*," with his harness needles in his pocket or stuck all too visibly in his shirt or coat, and with his usual query of the parents on his arrival in the house, "How are the children behaving?" Yet the mother's brother was not to be construed as a tyrant, for the welfare of his nieces and nephews was of great importance to him. If they were ill, he made certain that they were given proper treatment; as they became older he was on the constant lookout for suitable wives and husbands; when they finally married the success of the marriage remained his concern. And though his sister's children did not joke with him, he was at liberty to tease them if he wished. "The way you look at my wife, one would think you are going to make her your own," he might say in jest to his nephew when the latter was paying him a visit.

Where the old patterns of behavior have broken down to the extent they have among the Seminole and where the local organization has been so badly disrupted, it is very difficult to evaluate the importance of the brother-sister tie as against that between husband and wife. Divorce statistics are very difficult to get, but on the relations of the mother's brother to his sister's family one further impression may be set down. The mother's brother should not be construed as taking the place of the father. On the contrary, in a way he strengthened the position of the father, for the imposition of punishment was shifted out of the sphere of the elementary family. The parents had a much easier time of it as a consequence; when their children were misbehaving, they called in the mother's brother, who lectured the youngsters on obeying their parents, punished them, and hence saw to it that the parent's teachings, as well as his own, were followed. "One word, and a child obeyed," the old women say, in comparing the past with the present. It was particularly

in the sphere of moral conduct that the influence of the mother's brother was effective. On the other hand, much of the manual skill involved in hunting, fishing, and the like was taught a boy by his father, and the latter generally retained an important place in the education of his children.

The pattern of behavior between the sister's children and the mother's brother was extended to all men in the mother's clan of his generation or older. Furthermore, every clan had a number of elders who gave advice on clan matters, while the oldest and most influential of these was the clan *amacoli*, or elder for the clan as a whole. These old men maintained a general interest in all the young people of the clan and a particular interest in the nephews and nieces to whom they were most closely related by blood. Thus a boy or girl usually had a number of older men of the same clan interested in his or her education and welfare, some of whom were of the grandparental generation. Toward all of them a respect relation was maintained; collectively they were referred to as *amacoláki*.

This relation between the clan elders, particularly the mother's brother, and the young people of the clan is illuminated by the following statement of an elderly Seminole:

The one they called *amacoli* was my uncle (mother's brother) or the brother of my uncle. It also meant my elder. In the clan the oldest man was *amacoli* for the clan. But a man older than I in the clan was also my *amacoli*.

The young people always obeyed the one they called *amacoli* and always did what he told them to do. They believed that whatever he said was right. They always looked up to him for advice. And the *amacoli* depended on his young people; in time of need he always called on them. He knew they would help him more than anyone else would.

The youngsters loved their *amacoli* and looked out for him. Whenever he visited where children were, their mother would ask him to give a talk to the boys and girls. He would tell them they must honor and respect their parents and the older people as well. Some did not obey their parents but people had nothing to do with such children. The *amacoli* said always to help others even if they weren't kin. If you were helpful the people would say, "That boy is a fine lad." But if the youngsters didn't mind their parents they would get scratched. So if the parents told *amacoli* that the children were not obeying them, he would scratch them.

If a young man were going to marry, the *amacoláki* would get together and tell him how to treat his wife. He must take good care of her and respect her. And the same way with the girl; she must be obedient to her husband and must not try to rule him. If a man wanted to ask for a girl, her *amacoláki* must be asked. It was always left up to them. And the girl must marry whom *amacoli* said she should, even if that person were an old man.

Old people knew the ways (particularly magic) so they were always respected. We do not mean educated the way white people are, but in Indian ways. Old people taught young men and women how to take care of themselves so they would not suffer (magic, medicine, right conduct).



The *amacoli* wanted the old ways; he didn't want them changed. So he always told the young people to uphold old Indian customs. They must not forget, but remember what *amacoláki* said.

Now it is all different.

*Grandparents-grandchildren.*—The behavior of boys and girls, men or women, toward their grandparents was one of respect and helpfulness. Old people generally were looked to for advice and counsel in Seminole society and the respect behavior of young to old was a marked one in the grandparent-grandchild relation. Grandchildren were taught never to make fun of their grandparents, but always to be attentive, reverent, and obedient to them. On their part grandparents, with the exception of the paternal grandmother, were free to tease or mildly joke their grandchildren if they wished to. The welfare of their grandchildren was of considerable concern to them, and the youngsters apparently depended on them as a sort of buffer against harsh treatment on the part of the parents or uncles. However, I was told that a grandfather could also occasionally scratch a child in punishment for wrong-doing. If in their opinion the children were not being properly cared for, the grandparents were among the first to tell the parents to improve matters.

#### KINSHIP BEHAVIOR AND THE CLAN

The discussion of kinship behavior has so far been concerned primarily with relationships centering in the family group. The character of behavior among other types of consanguineal kin can best be described with reference to certain general rules based on clan affiliation. We shift attention therefore from the family to the clan.

*Relations within the clan.*—Behavior within the clan tended to crystallize on generation lines. Among those of the same generation calling each other by sibling terms the relation was one of familiarity, such as that described for children of the same parents. There was a definite feeling of solidarity among the members of one clan and this seemed to have been particularly true of those of the same generation, among whom an easy informality apparently prevailed. As for those in the ascending generations, I have already indicated the character of the relation between the mother's brother and his sister's children and the extension of this type of behavior to men of both the first and second ascending generations. The behavior between the mother's sister and her sister's children was largely an extension of the mother-child pattern; one was expected

to obey and respect one's "little mother," though she might tease her "little child." With other "little mothers" in the clan it was much the same, and with women of the second ascending generation a like type of behavior prevailed. Within the clan, therefore, the patterns seemed to have been: familiarity within the same generation; respect to ascending generations; and a sort of optional mild familiarity to descending generations.

*The father's clan.*—Between a given clan and all the sons and daughters of men belonging to that clan a strict respect relation prevailed, with a prohibition on any kind of joking. This was one of the strongest and most sharply defined patterns of behavior in Seminole society and has persisted to the present day. It was the obligation of each of these groups of kin to (1) help and be respectful in manner to each other, and particularly to (2) protect members of the opposite group from ridicule and belittlement. Thus a man or woman was supposed never to make fun of, joke with, or tease anyone in the father's clan, no matter how young or old the latter might be. On their part the members of the father's clan observed the same kind of behavior to the clan "children"—that is, the sons and daughters of men in the clan. The respect behavior described as holding true in the father-child relation was accordingly extended to the father's brother and all males in the father's clan (all of whom were "little fathers") and to the father's sister and all females in this clan (all of whom were "grandmothers"). It should be noted that the paternal grandmother, being in the father's clan, did not tease or show familiarity to her son's children.

Curiously enough the respect toward the father's clan was extended to the father's clan totem also. Towards the totem of one's own clan I discovered no particular attitude of respect and no very well-defined attitude at all, for that matter. But the totem of the father's clan was not to be treated or spoken of disrespectfully. One or two informants even said that the father's totem should not be killed, but I doubt very much that this was ever followed in practice. Certainly a man did not hesitate to hunt deer because his father belonged to the Deer clan. But if one did kill his father's totem animal he was careful about the disposition of the carcass. When I was in Oklahoma a man was censured for tying a skunk he had killed to a tree and letting it hang there until decomposed. The man's father belonged to the Skunk clan and it was felt that the Skunk clan's "son" had been disrespectful to his father's clan in the way he had disposed of the animal's body.



However, what gave the respect relation to the father's clan a really distinctive cast was the negative sanction applied to those who failed to observe the traditional rule of behavior. If anyone made fun of his father's clan or one of its members or was otherwise not properly respectful, the other clan "children"—those whose fathers belonged to this clan—seized some personal possession of the offender, such as a hat, a scarf, or in serious cases even a saddle, and held it for ransom, this being exacted by way of a fine for the offense. The fine was then divided among the clan "children" who had seized the article; if the fine was not paid they kept the article. Women were said to have been particularly touchy about seeing that due respect was paid their father's clan and to have been especially active in applying the sanction to negligent persons. However, if a possession of someone were seized because he had been disrespectful to his father's clan and if the incident occurred in the presence of a member of the injured clan, I was told that the latter might pardon the offender if he wished, thereby annulling the need for payment of the fine; yet apparently this was not a usual practice.

Theoretically the same negative sanction was applied by members of a single clan to one of their number who had been disrespectful to a clan "child." I did not hear of an instance where the sanction was actually applied, however, and the cases of which I learned involved disrespect in the other direction—that of clan "child" to the father's clan.

Although the relation between the father's clan and the children of the clan was one of respect, it was also apparently used as a sort of foil in joking. Thus two members of the Bear clan might intentionally make fun of a third member of the Bear clan (all being of the same generation) in the hope of getting a rise out of a Bear "son" standing nearby. If the latter took no notice, the incident would soon reach the ears of other Bear "sons" and "daughters," who would take him to task for not standing up for the ridiculed Bear. On the other hand, if the Bear "son" defended the member of his father's clan who was being ridiculed, the other Bears had achieved their purpose and were much amused. Or again, a Bear "son" might tell a joke on a member of his father's clan, but couch the language in such respectful terms that only a clever person would realize what was intended; actually, this could still get the story-teller into trouble of course. However, these examples indicate the possibilities of this type of Indian humor, whose nuances were many and varied. I observed a number of such instances and was

told that it was true in the olden days as well, so presumably it was not a very recent innovation.

*Sons and daughters of the father's clan.*—In the preceding discussion of behavior, those persons classed as siblings were all of the same clan and generation. However, sibling terms were also used among those whose fathers belonged to the same clan; this type of sibling obviously came from different clans and might be of any age. Theoretically the behavior among them was one of familiarity similar to that holding in the case of other siblings, though where age differences were marked such familiarity was apparently restrained and tempered by the difference in generation. This modification of familiarity through distinction in generation, which ordinarily demanded respect of young to old, proved to be a very difficult matter to investigate and one on which my data are not fully conclusive. In the case of those whose fathers belonged to the same clan the degree of respect for old persons was probably an intensification of the attitude of younger to older siblings.

*Father's father's and mother's father's clans.*—Between the father's father's and mother's father's clans on one hand and all those whose paternal or maternal grandfathers belonged to these clans on the other the relation was one of familiarity. This familiarity was restrained where age differences were very marked. Ego did not joke with his own grandfathers and was rather careful about his conduct with other old people in these clans, but as he approached maturity he joked a good deal with other members, particularly those his own age, who were all his "big grandfathers." There was no restriction on jokes with an obscene reference, even between those of opposite sex. A man or woman was perfectly free to marry into the clan of his father's father or mother's father, though I found no evidence that he or she was advised to do so, nor any conclusive evidence for preferential mating with these clans. However, the joking relation and its similarity to Cherokee practice suggests that this may once have been the case (cf. Gilbert, 1937, pp. 310-314).

#### LINEAGE, GENERATION, AND BEHAVIOR

The foregoing remarks may be summarized in a form similar to that used in the preceding section on terminology. Figure 11 shows again the socially most important groups of consanguineal kin, other than ego's own clan-mates. I have already described how lineage entered into the terminological classification of these groups, which themselves were based on the clan organization, and I discussed

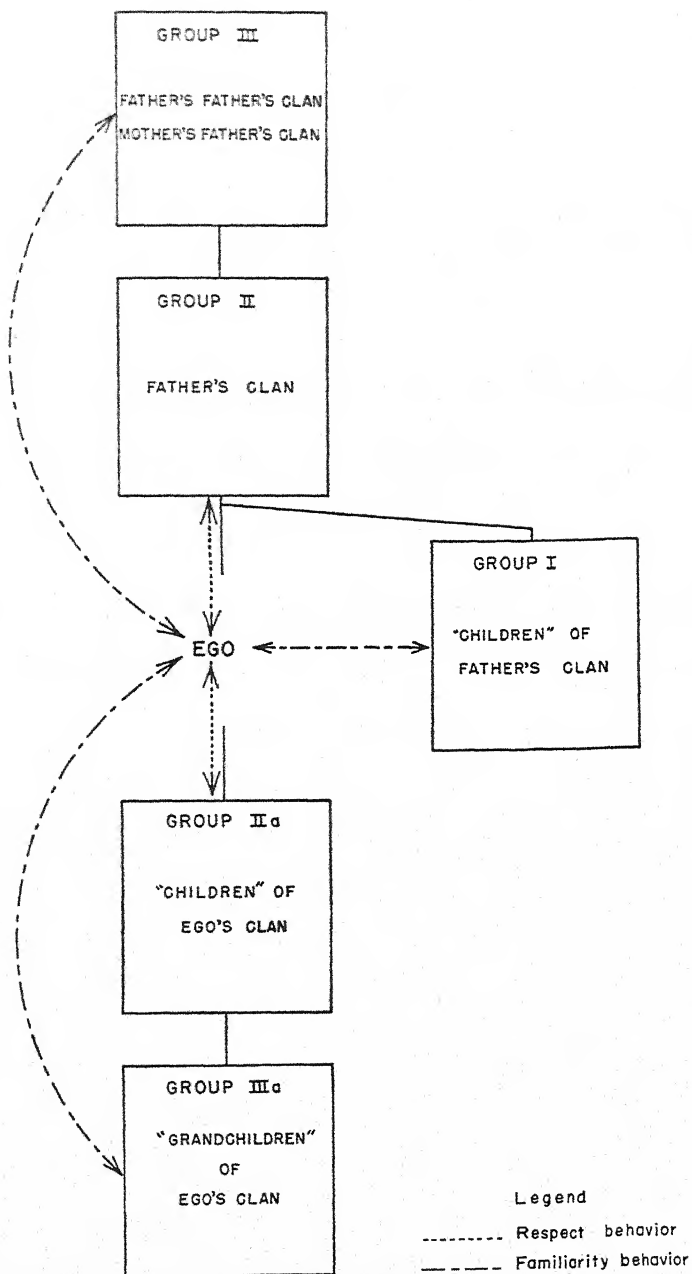


FIG. 11. Respect-familiarity behavior and the clan.

briefly how the behavior patterns relating to these groups tended to crystallize on clan lines. If we put these patterns of behavior into diagrammatic form, however, an interesting fact emerges. Though the various groups were "natural" classes in the sense of being based on the clan organization, which in turn reflected an emphasis on and an expansion of lineage, the respect-familiarity behavior, from the point of view of our imaginary ego, reflected the working of a generation principle. Thus between ego and Groups II and IIa there was strong mutual respect, while between ego and Groups I, III, and IIIa familiarity prevailed. However, the clan organization gave this principle a new twist, for Groups I, II, IIa, III, and IIIa contained persons of all ages. This fact in turn leads to the inevitable qualification that blurs the picture, for ego's behavior toward at least some old people in Groups I, III, and IIIa tended to slide over toward the respect pole of the respect-familiarity axis. But the qualification does not invalidate the principle expressed in Figure 11, for that principle was clearly shown in the attitudes of informants.

#### OTHER CONSANGUINEAL KIN

It has been pointed out that the extension of kinship behavior tended to formalize on clan lines to take care of consanguineal relatives other than those to whom an actual genealogical relation could be traced. These kin are those included in Figures 9 and 10. However, in the preceding section on terminology, it was shown that the terminological system could be extended still further, though no new terms were thereby introduced. With these relatives it was largely an extension of attitudes—theoretical kinds of behavior felt to be appropriate. It is here that the intensity of contact as it affected actual behavior was most apparent. Thus the subjective, conscious reaction to behavior patterns among consanguineal kin was most intensely felt within the immediate family and with blood relatives of both parents, slightly less so with the main groups based on clan affiliation which have just been outlined, and very much less so with other more remote consanguineal relatives.

#### RELATIVES BY MARRIAGE

*Cahacawá-cahacawá*.—A man used the term *cahacawá* for the wives of his brother, his sister's son, and his mother's brother, and for the sisters of his own wife, all of whom were potential spouses. These women called him by the same term. Between these *cahacawá* of

opposite sex there was much joking and teasing. Sexual matters were favorite subjects for jest. To what extent extra-marital sexual intercourse was also permitted is doubtful, though an old Creek (Creek and Seminole customs were very similar) stated that it was a fine thing if you could get away with it. The punishment for adultery was very strict with both Seminoles and Creeks, though I do not know whether sexual intercourse with an unmarried sister of the wife was considered a crime.

The joking relationship between *cahacawá* of opposite sex was the most intense one in Seminole society. I gained the impression that it also was the only one where joking, teasing, and familiarity generally were given much actual encouragement by tradition. In the other relationships I have described, familiarity might be permitted, but its translation into actual behavior was largely a matter of individual temperament. Between *cahacawá*, however, joking was expected. Familiarity was also expressed in other ways. Thus, a favorite game held at the town square ground was one where opposing sides tried to gain possession of a ball and throw it at the upper end of a long pole set upright in the ground; a point was made if the ball struck the pole at the upper end. In this game the men played against the women, each side having a leader. The two leaders were chosen so that they stood in the *cahacawá* relation, the reason given being that they consequently "played hard against each other" and did not refrain from bodily contact and tearing each other's clothes.

As usual, some qualification of the above statements must be made. The familiarity between a man and his *cahacawá* was tempered by difference of age and degree of nearness or remoteness of relation. He did not joke as much with the wife of some distant classificatory brother not in his own clan as with his own brother's wife. The degree of familiarity also depended to a large extent on the character of the feeling between a man and the husband of his *cahacawá*. If the two latter were not on friendly terms, familiarity between the two *cahacawá* was correspondingly conditioned. The former relation had an important effect on the latter.

Between women who called each other *cahacawá* behavior was said to correspond to that prevailing between sisters.

*Ancokowákki-aykapóci* (brother-in-law-brother-in-law).—The character of this relation apparently varied according to individual temperament. Statements from informants were conflicting and contradictory. A few old men said that the two men who stood

in this relationship never joked with one another. Other informants said that if before marriage a man and his brother-in-law were on terms of familiarity, the marriage did not inaugurate a respect relation, though if before marriage they were relative strangers, they did not joke with one another afterwards. With the Seminole today whatever formal behavior pattern may once have obtained in this relationship is of no significance.

*Parents-in-law-children-in-law.*—The relation was one of strong mutual respect with a prohibition on joking or familiarity of any kind. I was told that in the old days a man avoided his mother-in-law and a woman her father-in-law. Although the avoidance apparently broke down at an early date, the respect relation continued to be observed. A man communicated with either his mother-in-law or daughter-in-law by way of his wife, or his father-in-law or son respectively, while a woman followed the same pattern in dealing with parent-in-law or child-in-law of opposite sex. This custom still tends to prevail in a few of the most conservative families. In one with which I am well acquainted, the daughter-in-law seldom communicates directly with her father-in-law but prefers to express herself through his wife or his son (usually the former), though there is no attempt at avoidance.

Between classificatory parents-in-law and children-in-law the respect relation held only in mild form, if at all. This proved a difficult point on which to obtain adequate information, though at least one interesting question is involved. Thus a man observed a strict form of respect behavior to his father's clan. His wife called all the men in this clan "father-in-law" and all the women "mother-in-law," regardless of age. Did she too observe a respect relation to members of her husband's father's clan? The same question may be asked in the case of a man and his wife's father's clan. Actually my information indicates that between a man or woman and his or her classificatory "parents-in-law" in the spouse's father's clan behavior tended to follow age lines. Joking was permissible if there was no great age difference, but respect of young to old was obligatory. However, I am inclined to believe that this relation was one of the first to change its character through acculturative influences.

*Other affinal relatives.*—With other classes of affinal relatives—classificatory "little fathers," "little mothers," "grandfathers," "grandmothers," "grandchildren"—behavior was for the most part a weakened extension of that already described for these particular

relatives. There is, however, an important question, namely, in cases where generation was over-ridden by lineage in the terminology. For example, the husband of the father's sister and the husbands of all women in the father's clan were called "grandfather." These grandfathers were of widely varying ages. The behavior pattern between ego and the father's sister's husband corresponded approximately to that of grandchild-grandparent, though the former was apparently not formalized and rather amorphous. However, as ego reached adulthood he naturally began acquiring "grandfathers" (men married to women in his father's clan) who were of the same generation as he; how did he behave toward them? In this case my evidence is inconclusive, though no formalized pattern existed in recent times at least. The behavior in this "grandchild"- "grandparent" relation may always have been of an amorphous type; on the other hand, it may also have been one of the first patterns to succumb to acculturative influence. The same is true of the other classes of relatives noted above, to which single terms were applied but which included persons of widely varying ages. It is essentially a question of the extent to which lineage over-rode generation in the sphere of kinship behavior, as well as in that of terminology; unfortunately, with regard to the spouses of members of the father's clan I doubt that the necessary data can be secured at the present time.

#### CORRELATION OF BEHAVIOR AND TERMINOLOGY

For the kinship system as a whole, there was a fairly close correlation between behavior and terminology. As I have just noted, this correlation tended not to be apparent in those relations where behavior was amorphous and unformalized, particularly with regard to affinal relatives, such as those married to persons in the father's clan. With affinal kin there might also be an obvious lack of correlation. Thus terminologically the spouse's father's clan was classed under two terms depending on sex, generation being disregarded; behavior, however, tended to follow generation lines. It is precisely on this point that deviations of behavior from terminology occurred in the Oklahoma Seminole kinship system; that is, though the lineage principle might be followed in the terminology, behavior tended to be based on differences of age and generation. As noted previously, the conflict between these two principles was apparent primarily with affinal kin. Viewed historically, this lack of correlation was probably always present to some degree, but I am inclined to believe that it has been accentuated with the gradual change



and ultimate breakdown of the kinship system. One of the first effects of acculturation was the restriction of the range of the system following the decline in the social importance of kinship and the clan. The effective working of a generation principle in the behavior of people does not necessarily depend on the recognition of kinship ties; however, such recognition does seem essential to the effective functioning of the lineage principle. As I hope to demonstrate later, there has been a shift in emphasis from lineage to generation throughout the kinship systems of the major Southeastern tribes. This shift affected behavior first. The terminology tended to lag behind.

#### KINSHIP AND SOCIAL CUSTOMS

As Creek and Seminole cultures were basically the same, most of the data I obtained on the following customs corroborate what is already available in the literature (particularly Swanton, 1928, pp. 97-107, 151-153, 166-167, 346-398). In the present section I have summarized the most important points regarding these customs, at the same time including what additional information I acquired in the field.

#### BIRTH

When it became known that an addition to the family was expected, "everyone would be happy, for the family was about to become stronger." During the period of pregnancy, both husband and wife underwent restrictions on their conduct. The expectant mother could not eat sweets or grease, as these would make the birth "sticky"; nor could she eat salt. The husband on his part did little hunting or fishing; his presence on a hunting party was thought to bring the whole party bad luck. Both father and mother avoided looking at anything ugly lest it influence the child. Shortly before birth the mother retired to a shelter built by her husband away from the main house. Here the child was born. The mother was attended by an old woman who acted as midwife, and by a female relative or two that assisted; no men were present, none of them venturing near the shelter. After some ten days the mother and child came back to the house, though the mother did not regain her normal status for about four months (probably not always this long). During this time she had her own eating utensils and a special bed, and could not sit in any chair or bench used by men. The latter did not touch or look closely at the new-born baby and avoided too close contact with the mother, for fear of falling ill. After the period was over the mother was again considered normal.



## CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

When a child was still quite young, sometimes shortly after birth, it was given a name by an old person, usually a grandfather or clan elder. This name either referred to some event in the giver's life or was made up on the spot. Actually this personal name was never used in direct address, no matter how old or young the owner. Instead, children were called *anci-pá-na-t* ("boy") or *anhoktoci* ("girl"), or by their house names. The latter were given by the parents and were descriptive of the child or its actions; thus, a quiet little girl might be called *císsi* ("mouse") or an excitable and active one *tapó-cka* ("explosion"). Surnames and English names came in with missionaries and schools, and the transmission of the surname through the patrilineal line is now firmly established. Formerly kinship terms were used for adults rather than names.

Children were early taught the essentials of good manners and proper conduct. Respect for adults and old people was emphasized. As far as old people were concerned, respect was instilled partly through fear of the magical practices which most old persons knew, and partly through regard for the wisdom and experience of age. "The old people were like the shade of a tree sheltering the young from the sun," an elderly Seminole once remarked.

With the coming of puberty, boys made a step forward by acquiring their ceremonial names at the town square ground. These names, compounded by adding a clan or town name to a traditional appellation such as "king," "warrior," etc., ran in clan lines, but were publicly given by the clan of the boy's father. At the same time a boy assumed the various ceremonial duties and obligations, such as observing periods of fasting and medicine-taking, which were obligatory for all males during performances of dances like the Green Corn Dance in the late spring. Heretofore, the boys had been kept under the care of the women at town dances; now they began to assume the status of men.

Girls received no ceremonial names and apparently the only event to mark their approach to adulthood was the assumption of the obligations associated with menstruation. These were similar to those connected with pregnancy. A menstruating girl or woman isolated herself, spending her period away from the family, cooking her own food and using her own dishes. She did not venture into the fields lest the plants weaken and die. She attended no dances at the square ground. After her menstrual period, she bathed and put on fresh clothes. If she were married, her husband was also

obliged to be careful of his behavior. He did not scratch his nieces and nephews in punishment, for it was thought scratches made at this time would become infected and refuse to heal. At dances he took medicine last, and if the town were about to play a match ball game with another town of opposite "fire," he had to sit in a special place and be the last to take medicine in the preliminary ceremonies. These restrictions were all in the nature of hygienic precautions. A menstruating woman was believed to carry influences dangerous to the health of herself and others. Such influences were counteracted through the observance of traditional behavior during menstruation. Now that these customs are no longer followed, the old people say it is no wonder that the Indians die young, that medicine-men lose their power, and that the health of the tribe has declined.

During childhood and youth the boy or girl gradually acquired the skills necessary to make a living. The boy learned to hunt by participating in hunting parties composed mostly of older men, and by following the teachings of father, uncle, or grandfather. The first four deer a boy shot he himself could not eat, but gave to older relatives. He learned to split rails and build cabins and shelters. He learned to play the lacrosse game and to dance, watching the well-known dance leaders and admiring the composition of their songs. Bit by bit he picked up some knowledge of magic from an elder to help him in hunting or in sickness, while an older boy might impart a brief ritual for the making of love-medicine. If he were intelligent and adept, he might later be taken in hand by a medicine-man and become a professional in the practice of magic.

Girls on their part were taught the household duties of women. They learned how to cook, particularly how to make the much-loved safki drink, blue dumplings, and sour bread. They worked in the fields and took care of other children. However, the folk household arts, such as the making of basketry and pottery, suffered an early decline.

Throughout their youth, the boys and girls were watched by their maternal uncles. In the old days at the Green Corn Dances the clan elders instructed the young people in traditional ways. As the latter reached adulthood, the uncles made ready for the next important step in the lives of their nephews and nieces—that of marriage.

#### MARRIAGE

In former times marriages tended to be within the town. No one, however, was permitted to marry into his own clan, whether

in the same town or not. Also it was not considered right to marry anyone in the father's clan, though there was no serious physical punishment for so doing. The negative sanction was chiefly one of ridicule. It was said that a person who married into the father's clan would get a severe case of "itch"; he would be laughed at, and to his face called "the man with the itch." Even today there are not many of these marriages. Among the old people there is still a feeling that a marriage of this sort would leave one in a continual quandary as to how to act toward one's kinfolk and what to call them, for the working of the kinship system would be badly disrupted. Lastly, a man and woman whose fathers belonged to the same clan were in theory not supposed to marry, as they were classificatory brother and sister.

In the selection of their spouses young people had little to say. A young man might indicate to his parents or his mother's brother that he was ready to marry and that he favored a certain girl, but unless his elders agreed and arranged the match, his wishes generally came to naught. A girl's opinion carried even less weight and she might be required to make the best of a bad bargain. Prior to their marriage, a husband and wife often had little to do with one another. The arrangements were in the hands of the mother's brother, though the permission of the parents was necessary and they might be the ones to initiate preliminary discussion. The matter was settled when the mothers' brothers of the girl and the boy came to an agreement. Often the elders of the two clans involved were also consulted.

There was little or no ceremony attached to the actual wedding. Once the match had been decided, the groom simply came to live with his bride at the residence of her family. Usually the two young people were given a talk by the mother's brother, who might be accompanied by a clan elder or two. They were told that they must take good care of one another, and that they must never speak slightly of their parents-in-law and should always be helpful and respectful to them. Sometimes the young man gave a small gift to his parents-in-law and the bride one to hers.

For the space of about a year the groom lived with his wife's family; during this time he was supposed to help support the family and do various jobs for them, such as cutting wood and carrying water. Thereafter the young people set up their own establishment, the families of the two uniting to build them a cabin. I was told that a daughter liked to have her house near that of her mother.

Dave Cummings, an elderly Seminole and the present chief at the Liwahili square ground, said that the location of the house might be decided by the young couple's sleeping out for a night at the chosen spot; if either suffered bad dreams, such as being chased by bears or wolves, another spot was selected. He also stated that after the cabin had been built it was not immediately occupied. A medicine-man was the only one allowed near it for four days, during which time he sprinkled medicine on the inside corners of the house each day, thereby giving the future occupants magical protection against misfortune.

After the marriage of his nephew or niece, the responsibility of the mother's brother did not cease. He continued to look after his charge and visited the young couple to see how they were getting along. If the bride or groom showed signs of laziness, inhospitality, or bad temper, the mother's brother or another clan elder gave the offender a lecture. "Marriage was better then than now," an old woman told me. "You always had an elder behind you."

Polygyny was a common practice which lasted until recent times. However, only the older and wealthier men could afford more than one wife and I know of no man who had more than three. Usually these were sisters, though I collected several instances of a man's having two wives who were not sisters. In such case I was told that he secretly made medicine to "make his wives just like sisters" and hence to counteract the jealousy and quarreling that was expected to break out between the two women. It was usual for wives who were not sisters to maintain separate households apart from each other. In this connection it should be mentioned that an older man had much greater freedom in selecting a wife than a younger one.

Both levirate and sororate prevailed among the Seminole. The levirate included the marriage of a widow with her deceased husband's sister's son. Marriage involved the setting up of a tie between both the immediate families of husband and wife and the entire clans of each. If either spouse died without leaving any close relatives, the clan of the dead spouse nevertheless had a claim on the surviving partner, and he or she was usually obliged to remarry into that clan.

Incest and adultery were both very severely punished. Incest included any sexual intercourse between members of one clan, whether they were actually related or not. In ancient times the prohibition probably extended to linked clans as well. In cases of known incest, the clan elders called a clan council and then

proceeded to punish the offenders, with all the clan supposed to be present. The guilty pair was usually flogged and scratched; originally scratching was done with garfish teeth but later a harness needle was substituted. Before being used on the unfortunate offenders, the needle was treated so that the scars of the scratches would never disappear, but remain as visible evidence of guilt. The punishment for adultery was equally strict; it included the cutting off of hair and ears, sometimes the tip of the nose, and a thorough flogging to boot. In later days the custom declined and adultery became punishable according to the laws of the nation. However, a few old people remember cases of punishment in the old manner, and one account is included:

Little Simon committed adultery with another man's wife. The woman's husband found out and told his wife's uncle. The husband's clan elders and the wife's elders got together and caught Little Simon and the woman. They whipped them both, the man until he was insensible. They also cut off the hair and ears of each. I knew they were going to do this and came along to the place a little later. The sun sparkled on something in the dust. It was the gold ear-rings of the woman, still in the ears. They were lying there on the ground.

Divorce was said to be relatively infrequent, but in the absence of adequate data the statement remains unsubstantiated. The chief ground for divorce was neglect on the part of one spouse of his or her family duties, though incompatibility was also mentioned. If a couple could not get along, even though the mothers' brothers of the two had attempted to straighten matters out, a divorce was effected simply through separation. Children remained with the mother. In case of remarriage, it was not necessary for either partner to take another husband or wife from the same clan. In fact, if a divorced spouse had been lazy, slovenly, and neglectful, the stigma tended to extend to his or her whole clan, as they were more or less responsible for their members' conduct. In such case another clan could be selected in remarriage.

#### DEATH

When an individual died, he was dressed in good clothes and buried as soon as possible. There was no town graveyard, though a family often buried its dead next to one another. The grave was dug by one or more old men, young men not being permitted to undertake this task. The body was put into the grave and each person present tossed in a handful of earth before the grave was filled. Few people came, and after the burial each one took a little medicine that a doctor had specially prepared, while the gravediggers also sprinkled medicine on their clothes and tools. Burial was

without ceremony, though I was told that sometimes an old man might give a short eulogy.

Four days after death the house of the deceased was thoroughly cleaned and the yard raked. All clothes and bedding were washed. Cedar leaves were burned in the house and medicine sprinkled around it. At the same time a small house-like shelter of wood was built over the grave; after finishing it, the workers took medicine again and sprinkled their clothes and tools with it. There was considerable fear of the dead man's ghost and of death generally, and the associated magical practices were essentially protective measures.

As soon as a man died his wife was put to bed. There she stayed for four days, completely covered, though she was permitted to attend the burial. However, she was kept blindfolded except during the time she was at the grave. After the four-day period her mourning was not yet over. One or two old informants said that in ancient times it lasted for four years, but that later it was reduced to four months. Most Indians agreed on the latter figure and it probably was always more nearly the correct one. During mourning the widow kept close to the house, attending no dances or other social gatherings. She removed all her jewelry, dressed in her oldest clothes, let her hair go uncombed, and went unwashed and unkempt. At the end of the four months she washed and put on clean clothes; if there were a dance at the square ground she attended it, thereby showing that she had regained her normal condition. One very old Seminole woman, Alli Tanyan, said that it was usual for several unmarried women of the husband's clan to visit the widow during the mourning period and perhaps to clean her up a little. At the end of the four months they came again. This time they helped the widow bathe and dress, providing her with clean new clothes. Then they said either "You still belong to us," which meant that a new husband of the same clan had been selected, or "We let you go now," which was a way of notifying the widow that she was free to marry into a different clan. But it was usual to take another spouse from the same clan.

Men were allowed a little more freedom during the mourning period. However, they also stayed in bed for four days after the death of the wife and remained in mourning four months, avoiding others and wearing old clothes.

The question of inheritance is a difficult one. Nowadays, of course, the custom followed is that prescribed by the laws of the state of Oklahoma. What it was formerly I am not sure. However,



the spouse always seemed to have been given some of the deceased's property. Some personal possessions were often buried with the owner and some might be given to individual relatives shortly before death. One complicating circumstance is that the ideas about the ownership of property have changed. Formerly, when a house was built it belonged to the wife, as did everything in it except the husband's personal belongings. Now the opposite tends to prevail. In the old days when a man died, his wife simply retained the house and its furnishings; despite the later change in the concept of ownership she continued to maintain an important claim on the property at his death. As for other goods and chattels I am uncertain. Land was never owned by individuals and hence was not involved.

#### SUMMARY

The principal social groupings among the Oklahoma Seminole centered around the nation, the town, the household, and the clan. The kinship system was a Crow type. The terminological structure was consistent within itself and showed a close relation to the clan organization. The chief principles of terminological classification involved generation, sex, lineage, and clan. Formal behavior patterns existed, though examination of a number of relations, particularly those involving affinal kin, revealed an amorphous and unformalized type of behavior depending considerably on individual temperament. Behavior and terminology harmonized fairly well except that there were inconsistencies between the two in these same relations, where lineage was emphasized in the terminology but not necessarily in behavior. It was suggested that such inconsistencies were probably always present in some degree, though they may have been accentuated with the decline in the clan organization. The latter was seen to have been closely related to the kinship system and to have had ramifications in various customs relating to the life cycle. An emphasis on matrilineal descent was apparent in the organization of formal groupings such as the clan, in the kinship structure, and in the strength of customs relating to the avunculate. Certain deficiencies in the data are apparent. The actual social functions of the formalized behavior patterns were not fully shown; facets of the clan organization other than those described here or in the literature no doubt existed; material on inheritance is incomplete. However, most of this information can no longer be obtained and sufficient has been presented to make clear the outlines of the kinship system against the background of social custom.

### III. THE ABORIGINAL SEMINOLE KINSHIP SYSTEM

Although most of the Seminole were moved to Oklahoma following the Seminole Wars, a small number refused to surrender to the federal government and retreated into the wild interior of the Florida peninsula. Today their descendants are the least acculturated Indians in the Southeast. In a previous report (Spoehr, 1941a), I published a brief sketch of the social organization of the Cow Creek Seminole, one of the Florida Indian bands. The problem now arises as to whether it is possible to extract, by comparison of the Oklahoma and Florida divisions of the tribe, a kinship type which can be considered the ancestor of the kinship systems of Florida and Oklahoma, respectively. If such a type can be ascertained, it may be sufficiently representative of the condition prior to the major changes effected by white contact to enable us to push forward a little further the frontiers of Southeastern ethnography.

The principal difficulty in formulating an aboriginal Seminole kinship system is one of reconciling the differences between Florida and Oklahoma. When a particular feature of social organization differs in the two divisions of Seminole, a decision must be made as to which form is the older. The problem is complicated by the fact that the data used here are drawn from two time levels. The Florida material refers to the present; that from Oklahoma to a period fifty years or more ago. In formulating an ancestral form of Seminole kinship, I have assumed that the differences in the general character of the culture change in Florida on one hand, and in Oklahoma on the other, account for the differences in social organization between the two divisions of Seminole. Consequently, we must first note those factors which made for change or for conservatism among the Seminole of Florida and of Oklahoma in order to gain an insight into the historical background of the dissimilarities between the two groups.

#### SOCIAL CHANGE AND WHITE CONTACT

After the conclusion of the Seminole Wars and the removal to the west of the main body of the tribe, only a mere handful of Indians, estimated at about 200, remained in Florida. This little group scattered through the more remote parts of the interior outside the reach of the military. The result was a changed relation of the Indians to their environment and an alteration of the social relations among themselves. The old town organization apparently



disintegrated; hunting became more important relative to agriculture; there were naturally fewer clans with the smaller population; and ceremonial life seems to have become simplified with the greater dispersion of the people. Although these changes were initiated by white contact, they rose in an indirect manner from it. We may contrast this type of social change with that among the main group of Seminole in Oklahoma. Here there was continuous, first-hand contact with whites, particularly missionaries. As I have already noted, the latter started boarding schools, and hence altered the relations of parents, uncles, and clan elders to the children. The traditional authority of uncles and clan elders in matters pertaining to education and marriage was weakened. In the organizations of the Christian church the clan was not recognized as being of any great importance and hence suffered a corresponding decline. In Oklahoma social change was stimulated by continuous contact, whereas in Florida the original contact situation brought about social change in a more indirect manner. Actually the two types of contact change have no doubt existed in both Florida and Oklahoma, but a single type has tended to predominate in each place. At present, however, the Florida Seminole have been thrust into close contact with whites and their social organization may very well show in the future changes similar to those that have taken place in Oklahoma.

Among both divisions there were also factors which tended to retard change. In Florida this was primarily a matter of the relative isolation of the Indians and of their great conservatism. Although they maintained continuous trade relations with whites after the Seminole Wars, their chief desire was that the white man leave them alone in their daily pursuits. By living in the interior, the Indians were able to regulate the amount of contact with whites. In the religious field, missionary attempts to convert the Indians have never made appreciable headway.

In Oklahoma too there was room for conservatives. The greater size of the Seminole population in Oklahoma was in itself probably the most important permissive factor enabling the old social system to continue functioning in the traditional way. I have also mentioned the fact that the territories of the tribes surrounding the Oklahoma Seminole afforded the latter some protection from white penetration until the time of allotment of Indian lands. In fact, the type of change characteristic of Oklahoma was perhaps not so inflexible as that which prevailed in Florida, for in Oklahoma one could exercise a certain choice in the adoption or rejection of ideas and institutions

brought by white contact agents. In Florida, on the other hand, the social changes were largely grounded in the necessity of making new environmental adjustments, with a consequent restriction in the range of choice left to the individual.

#### COMPONENTS OF THE ABORIGINAL KINSHIP SYSTEM

The method used in the following formulation of an original Seminole kinship type is one of finding similarities and reconciling differences between Florida and Oklahoma. In regard to the differences, the decision as to which of two dissimilar forms is the older has been based on the following considerations: (1) The importance of kinship in primitive societies. The course of change following white contact is usually a decline in the social importance of kinship as a regulator of social relations. (2) The factor of consistency with the known matrilineal character of aboriginal Seminole social organization. (3) Consistency with the known size of tribal population and with environmental conditions. As for the similarities between Florida and Oklahoma, it is possible that the two divisions changed in the same way; however, lacking evidence of such possible parallel changes, I have had no recourse but to consider such similarities as representative of conditions prior to the split of the tribe.

A rather broad view of kinship will be taken. Not only will the kinship system proper be discussed, but also two closely related types of social grouping—the household and the clan. In any study of a particular aspect of social organization one finds it difficult to decide what to include and what to leave out. Among the Seminole the character of the household group, the clan, and the kinship system proper are all so closely related that a discussion of the latter alone is not fruitful. I shall also make occasional reference to the larger territorial unit consisting of a number of households, for the matter is important with reference to kinship in that the concentration or dispersion of households affects the nature of the contact among them.

#### KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

The kinship terms used among the Muskogee-speaking Seminole of Florida and their brethren in Oklahoma are, with a very few exceptions, the same. However, in formulating a kinship pattern we are more concerned with the applications of the terms than with the terms themselves. The discrepancies in the terminology between Florida and Oklahoma will consequently be discussed with regard to application. These differences are as follows:

(1) In Oklahoma the mother's brother's wife was classed with the sister-in-law, whereas in Florida she is usually classed with the mother's sister (an exception occurs when she belongs to the father's clan, in which case she may be called a "grandmother"). This terminological difference is no doubt related to the absence of the sororate and levirate as a formally sanctioned institution among the Cow Creek band of Florida (cf. Spoehr, 1941a, p. 23). I am inclined to believe that the reason for this is to be found in the small size of the band and the consequent lack of choice left to the society in regulating the remarriages of its members. In Oklahoma the mother's brother's wife, the wife's sister, and the brother's wife were all classed together as potential spouses, with the sororate and levirate recognized institutions. This is certainly the aboriginal condition.

(2) In Florida a single term, *anhoktálwa*, is used for a parent-in-law of either sex. In Oklahoma this term is used only for the mother-in-law, the father-in-law being called *ammá-hi*. *Ammá-hi* is not used by the Florida Seminole. Why this difference should occur I do not know, particularly as the literal translation of *anhoktálwa* is "my old woman," and it is difficult to see how it could come to be used in Florida for the father-in-law, as well as for his wife. However, the use of different terms for the parent-in-law of opposite sex is a deep-seated principle in the Oklahoma system and is also common to the Creeks. In Florida, it is also true that the members of the Cow Creek band are so inter-related that the father-in-law is almost always a consanguineal as well as an affinal relative and can be called by a consanguineal term, usually a classificatory uncle; it is possible that the father-in-law term, *ammá-hi*, was consequently dropped from common usage. For these reasons I am inclined to believe that the use of distinct terms for the two parents-in-law is the aboriginal form.

(3) Actually the chief difference in kinship terminology between Florida and Oklahoma is in the extension of terms. I have pointed out previously how the small size of the Cow Creek band in Florida and the restricted number of clans has tended to cramp the full and extended working of the terminological system (Spoehr, 1941a, pp. 18-20). Unlike the Oklahoma group, those in Florida have married (probably by force of circumstances) into the father's clan. This has gone on for several generations, with the result that there have been a large number of cross-cousin marriages between either real or classificatory cousins. In turn, this condition has produced a variety of alternative possibilities in the classification of kin.

When a man marries a woman of his father's clan, he is marrying a "grandmother"; his children are both his "sons" and "daughters" and his "little fathers" and "grandmothers," while other members of his father's clan can be called by either affinal or consanguineal terms. Many such marriages increase still further the terminological complications. The Florida situation is evidently the result of necessity, arising from the small number of Indians left on the peninsula after the Seminole Wars. The Oklahoma system is more consistent with the size of population prior to the Seminole Wars and seems to be more nearly representative of the aboriginal manner of extending kinship terms.

(4) In both Florida and Oklahoma there are two terms for the father's brother, *calkoci* ("little father") and *cahéyca* (in Oklahoma, *caséyca*). However, in Oklahoma the latter term apparently has been archaic for many years. On the other hand, in Florida *cahéyca* is used quite as much as *calkoci*, particularly for classificatory brothers of the father. The existence of two terms for the father's brother is certainly an old feature of the Seminole system, though which term was formerly used more it is impossible to say.

#### KINSHIP BEHAVIOR

Within the elementary family, kinship behavior in Florida and in Oklahoma is basically the same. Furthermore, the mother's brother-sister's child relation is similar, except that in Florida today the avunculate lacks some of the closeness of contact and importance in matters of education and marriage that was apparently true of the early days in Oklahoma. In Florida the tie between the mother's brother and sister's child seems to have been weakened by the scattering of households (cf. Spoehr, 1941a, pp. 21-22). In other relationships there are also similarities. The parent-in-law-child-in-law relation in both divisions of the tribe is one of mutual respect, though it is important to note that in Florida today there is no attempt at avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law, or father-in-law and daughter-in-law. The character of the relation between grandparents and grandchildren is also similar.

It is in regard to those patterns of behavior which in Oklahoma were based on clan affiliation that there is a surprising contrast between the two groups of Seminole. In Florida, the highly formalized respect relation to the father's clan is completely lacking, nor is there any particular respect toward the totem animal of the father's clan. Likewise, the feeling of familiarity toward the father's

father's and mother's father's clans and the institutionalized joking relation between a man and his sister-in-law are not to be found. Instead, behavior among the Florida Seminole tends to follow age and sex lines. With persons of one's own age, one may be familiar; toward older persons one is respectful; toward young individuals one may indulge in a sort of optional familiarity. This is modified by the fact that familiarity is usually stronger between persons of the same sex than between those of opposite sex. Although a more adequate knowledge of the language would no doubt have enabled me to discern nuances of behavior in Florida that I missed, there is no question about the absence of such marked patterns as respect for the father's clan and familiarity toward sisters-in-law.

Although the Florida Seminole are today the less acculturated division, I believe that the formal behavior patterns which existed in Oklahoma are more nearly the aboriginal forms. They were practiced by a much larger body of people and were also common to the Creeks, while as I mentioned previously, the break-up of the town organization in Florida led to considerable culture change. However, if the Oklahoma condition is the older, what happened in Florida to the distinct pattern of respect to the father's clan and familiarity to one's sister-in-law? My own interpretation is as follows: I have already pointed out the prevalence in Florida of taking a spouse from the father's clan. According to Oklahoma usage this would upset the kinship system badly. An individual is supposed to accord the men and women of his father's clan the utmost respect. At the same time the brother-in-law-sister-in-law relation is one of privileged familiarity. Now when a man marries into the father's clan, how is he to treat the women of that clan? By one rule he must respect them, but by the other he may, and is often expected to, take liberties with them. Here are two antithetical attitudes which come into collision with each other. My own feeling is that the Florida Seminole, originally forced by circumstances to marry into the father's clan, have solved the problem by throwing overboard both these formal patterns and adopting in their place a simple scheme based primarily on relative differences in age and sex.

In Oklahoma both the terminological system and the formalized respect-familiarity behavior patterns reflected an emphasis on lineage and clan. In Florida, although the kinship terminology reflects such an emphasis, the respect-familiarity behavior does not parallel Oklahoma usage. One should not infer that in Florida, lineage and clan are consequently of slight importance. On the

contrary, they are significant social facts on which is based a great deal of Florida Seminole life. Thus, an individual is born into a clan; the clan bond is a nexus holding the members together. A man is necessarily related to his father's clan through his father and to his wife's clan through his wife and children, but he has a feeling of solidarity with his own clan which to some extent he opposes to other clans. Also, lineage and clan are important in the residential arrangements and ceremonial organization. Therefore, in Florida the terminology agrees with other features of social organization, even though it is not correlated with the formal set of behavior patterns that existed among the Oklahoma Seminole.

#### THE HOUSEHOLD

The camp or household organization of Florida is based on the matrilineal lineage, with each household usually consisting of a woman, her daughters, their children, and the unmarried brothers and husbands of these. Occasionally the camp is composed only of an elementary family, but in such case the children are apt to be numerous. In other instances the camp includes women more remotely related to the lineage, together with their husbands and children, but the women in the camp must belong to the same clan. In Oklahoma the household was simply an elementary family group, except that there was temporary matrilineal residence of bride and groom. The Florida form of household grouping is certainly more consistent with the known matrilineal character of aboriginal Seminole and Creek society. Its former existence among the Creeks is attested to by Gatschet (1884, pp. 120-121). Apparently there was a change in Oklahoma from permanent to temporary matrilineal residence after marriage, with a related break-up of the extended family.

#### THE CLAN

The matrilineal, strictly exogamous clan is common both to Florida and to Oklahoma. There are only five clans among the Cow Creek Seminole of Florida, four of which—Panther, Bird, Deer, and Snake—are found in Oklahoma. The fifth Florida clan—Talahasee—is probably of recent formation and has no counterpart in the west.

The data show some differences in the social functions of the clan between the two divisions of the tribe. In Oklahoma there seems to have been a closer relation between clan elders and young people and a greater authority of the former over the latter in matters



pertaining to education and marriage. In Florida the clan ties together all the household groups whose women belong to one clan in a manner not found in Oklahoma (cf. Spoehr, 1941a, pp. 10-16). In both divisions the clan had similar political functions, particularly in the punishment for homicide, and, although the ceremonial organization of the Florida Seminole is simpler than that which once prevailed in the group which was moved west, the clan is important in determining the selection of officials for the ceremonies.

The phratry is more of a functioning group in Florida than it has been for many years in Oklahoma. An important feature of the phratry among both the Seminole and the Creek is the position of one clan in the phratry as "uncle" (or sometimes as "elder brother") to the others (Swanton, 1928, p. 145; Haas, 1939, pp. 600-601; Spoehr, 1941a, p. 15). This feature is an interesting extension of a kinship relation and a reflection of the matrilineal emphasis that runs through the formal social organization of the Seminole.

The dual division of clans into *hata-ka* and *cilo-ko* that prevailed among the Oklahoma Seminole is not found in Florida. In Florida there is, however, an unnamed dual division which has a limited function in the ceremonial sphere.

#### SUMMARY

The major points of difference between Oklahoma and Florida are those noted above. We are now in a position to state the constituents of our hypothetical kinship system. This consisted of the system proper, plus a series of closely related institutions and social groupings. There was first of all a Crow type of kinship terminology with the extension of terms based squarely on the clan in the manner described for the Oklahoma Seminole, together with the set of behavior patterns outlined for the same division of the tribe. Related to this was a distinctive set of social usages. The mother's brother-sister's child relation was an important one, particularly in matters of education and marriage. Both sororate and levirate were practiced and were reflected in kinship terminology. The kinship system was closely related to a matrilineal exogamous clan organization, which acted in cases of incest, adultery, and murder. The elders of each clan possessed considerable influence over the other members of the clan, particularly the younger people, whose education and marriage they helped regulate and direct. The clans had important ceremonial functions and were linked into phratral groups, as well as being separated into a "red" and "white" dual division. The household

was based on the matrilineal lineage and was composed of an extended family group. Residence after marriage was permanently matrilocal, except that presumably a household whose members became too numerous to be cared for adequately by prevailing domestic arrangements might divide into units of more convenient size. Lastly, the arrangement of the households was not one of dispersion, such as was the case in Florida before the establishment of the reservations a few years ago, but was rather one of a fairly compact grouping into a town organization, which probably tended toward endogamy.

There is no way of proving directly by known documentary sources that this pattern of social organization existed, nor is there any way of determining exactly its historic depth. Yet it agrees with what is known of Seminole social organization, and I submit the pattern as a well-considered guess as to the nature of the Seminole kinship system, the clan, and the household before the Seminole Wars and the removal west of the main part of the tribe.



#### IV. THE OKLAHOMA SEMINOLE TODAY

Before leaving the subject of Seminole kinship, we may note briefly the present condition of Oklahoma Seminole social organization. The data presented in the foregoing pages stemmed from the minds of old informants. These data refer to the past, not to the present. What, we may ask, has happened to the kinship system during the time span covered by the living generations of Seminole Indians in Oklahoma?

The kinship terminology has not changed in the application of terms. The pattern of descent from the father's sister or mother's brother, for instance, remains the same. But there is a great contraction in the range of the terminological system. The father's father's and mother's father's clans are no longer considered kin and terms are not applied to them. The Indians remember that members of the father's clan and the mother's clan were once all reckoned as kinfolk and so kin terms are sometimes used in referring to them, but the distinction between blood and classificatory relatives has become sharper, and the extension of terms to the latter is now largely a shade of the past. Affinal terms are seldom extended beyond the close blood kin of the spouse. Also, personal names are now used in place of kinship terms. In terminology, therefore, the main change has been a radical contraction of the system (cf. Antle, 1936. This paper contains several errors, but it illustrates the contraction of the terminological system).

Behavior patterns have faded until only survivals remain, though examples of the respect relation between the members of a clan and those whose fathers belonged to this clan can be observed. A good many Indians still hold to some form of the respect relation to the parents-in-law, particularly of the opposite sex. There is also a tendency for brother-in-law and sister-in-law to joke and tease each other, but this rarely occurs between classificatory *cahacawá*. These are all survivals of the more heavily formalized behavior patterns of the old system. More amorphous patterns have disappeared. Also, as the clan has declined in importance, it has become of less and less significance as a regulator of behavior. Age and sex remain as potential bases of behavior patterns, and there is a disposition to use difference of age and sex as a means of determining respect and familiarity. It should also be noted that in Oklahoma today families vary in their degree of conservatism, while there is a very marked difference between old and young in their knowledge and observance

## KINSHIP SYSTEM OF SEMINOLE

additional ways. Young people usually know little and often less of the social milieu in which their grandparents were reared.

The clan is nearly impotent and has lost most of its social function. However, I did not meet a Seminole who was ignorant of the to which he belonged, while very few people marry within their clan. It also continues to play a part in the seating arrangements and in the succession of the more important officials at the square grounds still in existence. Otherwise the clan is a thing of the past.

With a few possible exceptions the tie between the mother's brother and the sister's child has been broken. Scratching children and punishment has also passed away. Within the household group the father is considered the head of the family and generally exercises control there is over the children. Surnames have been adopted and pass down in the paternal line. Marriage arrangements are left to the young people themselves; the economic condition of the Seminole is generally so poor and disorganized that residence after marriage depends primarily on circumstances. The sororate and polygyny, punishment for adultery and incest, and prolonged mourning for widows and widowers have all disappeared as organized institutions.

At the time of the allotment of Indian lands the people of a band tended to take up allotments near one another, so that the band retained some of its territorial unity. Even today this tendency is evident, though the Seminole have lost most of their land to whites. The town, or band as it is now called, is not of much importance, though each band has three representatives on a rather ineffective tribal council. There are four square grounds still in operation though the ceremonial unity of the town has been shattered. Today the various church organizations are more vigorous and probably represent the most vital form of integration, apart from the family, which the Seminole possess. Though the church has taken over a number of features of the square ground, the clan system has not and nor does the church coincide with the old town community. The church group is not a closely knit territorial unit; its members are scattered rural population and suffer from the loose integration which such rurality imparts.

Most of these changes can be traced to two related aspects of the acculturation process: (1) active interference in Indian affairs on the part of whites, and (2) acceptance of this interference and

imitation of white patterns on the part of the Seminole.<sup>1</sup> As I have indicated, the most important contact agents up to the time of allotment were the missionaries, whose influence was felt particularly through the schools. The imitative aspect was more pervasive; thus even the non-Christians participated in the tribal government, which was set up on a white pattern. In addition there were certainly a number of changes of a concomitant nature. I have discussed the close relation of the kinship system to the clan. Change in the latter must inevitably have affected the former. Thus, the tribal government took over functions of the clan, such as punishment for murder; the newly established church groups did not utilize the clan in their organization; the schools tended to weaken the authority of the clan elders, who stood for traditional ways. All this must have had repercussions on the kinship system.

In regard to kinship, the change among the Oklahoma Seminole to the present time may be summarized as follows: The social importance of kinship has suffered a great decline. The effective kinship unit today is neither clan nor lineage, but the small elementary family group, together with close blood relatives of husband and wife. Kinship behavior patterns and the clan organization were the first to fade, though terminology has tended to shrink to the size of the present effective kinship unit. Related to this is the growing individualization of behavior. Finally, the strong matrilineal emphasis reflected throughout the old social organization has given way before the limited patrilineal emphasis present in our own society, with family names handed down in the male line and with the father rather than the mother's brother the dominant male authority in the education of children. These changes seem bound to become more pronounced and ultimately will probably affect the application of kinship terms, particularly those applied to the descendants of father's sister and mother's brother, where the emphasis on lineage is most apparent. However, the Seminole remain the least acculturated of the Five Civilized Tribes in Oklahoma, with the possible exception of a few of the Upper Creeks and a handful of Cherokees.

<sup>1</sup> Seminole social organization does not seem to have been affected by neighboring Indian tribes. The Creek Nation lay directly to the east and north; Creek and Seminole culture were very nearly the same. To the south were the Choctaw and to the west the Potawatomi.

## V. CONCLUSION

The present report consists primarily of an account of the kinship system of the Oklahoma Seminole. In addition, it contains a comparison of the Oklahoma and Florida divisions of the tribe in order to ascertain those features of the kinship system and related aspects of social organization which were functioning before the main part of the tribe was carried off to Oklahoma. The relevance of these findings for the comparative study of Southeastern social organization may be stated as follows:

(1) The Seminole data add an increment of knowledge to that which is already known of Southeastern social organization. We are consequently able to go one step further in the fruitful classification of the kinship systems from this area. Although the Florida and Oklahoma Seminole systems show certain differences, they are sufficiently similar for us to conclude that the original Seminole system was a straight Crow type. Also, the Eastern Cherokee possess a Crow type system which has many points of similarity to that of the Seminole. Inasmuch as these pertain to two of the least acculturated groups in the Southeast, it becomes increasingly probable that a "pure" Crow type of system was widespread in the Southeast, and that the variations of this type—particularly in regard to the descent pattern from the father's sister—that have been recorded from the Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Oklahoma Cherokee are later modifications resulting from contact with whites.

(2) The Muskogee-speaking Seminole are a direct offshoot of the Creeks. Both the Oklahoma and Florida Seminole are on the whole less acculturated than the Creeks. Consequently, knowledge of Seminole social organization can throw light on features of Creek social organization that have undergone change or no longer exist; for example, on the basis of the Seminole data it is almost certain that the Creeks also had a Crow type of kinship system in which the pattern of descent from the father's sister was the same as that recorded here for the Seminole (cf. Spoehr, 1941a, p. 24). Furthermore, new light is shed on other aspects of Creek social organization. The Creek household is a good example. In regard to its composition, Gatschet (1884, pp. 120-121) wrote:

Many towns appeared rather compactly built, although they were composed of irregular clusters of four to eight houses standing together; each of these clusters contained a gens, eating and living in common. The huts and cabins of the Lower Creeks resembled, from a distance, clusters of newly burned brick kilns, from the high color of the clay.

Allowing for the fact that earlier ethnographic accounts frequently confused an extended family grouping with that of a clan, I believe that this statement certainly indicates the presence among the Creeks of extended family groups similar to those of the Florida Seminole today. There is justification, therefore, for projecting newly found knowledge of the Seminole household backward in time. Another problem is raised. Among the Seminole a close relation was observed between the kinship system on one hand, and the clan, the household grouping, and forms of marriage on the other. Was this also true of the other Southeastern tribes, and to what extent are changes in their kinship systems related to changes in the clan, the household, and forms of marriage? Further investigation of the inter-relation of the various parts of the social organization of Southeastern tribes promises fruitful results.

(3) In Chapter II the character of the white contact agents affecting the Oklahoma Seminole was briefly described. In Chapters III and IV an outline was given of the social change among the Florida and Oklahoma Seminole and of the changes that have occurred in the Oklahoma Seminole kinship system. With the Seminole data before us, we are now in a position to examine more closely the character of kinship change among the Creek, Choctaw, and Cherokee. This problem will form the subject of the next report in this volume on Southeastern social organization.

## APPENDIX: LIST OF OKLAHOMA SEMINOLE INFORMANTS

Although a number of informants were used in addition to those listed below, the study is based primarily on information obtained from the following Indians. These include Christians and non-Christians of both sexes.

Name	Sex	Age
Bearfeet.....	Male	60+
White Caney.....	Male	60+
Rina Coker.....	Female	80+
Dave Cummings.....	Male	60+
Mrs. Dave Cummings.....	Female	60+
Louis Fife.....	Male	60+
Harry Jones.....	Male	55+
Mrs. Harry Jones.....	Female	55+
Mrs. McGiesey.....	Female	60+
Allie Tanyan.....	Female	70+
Nina Tanyan.....	Male	60+
Sallie Tanyan (Nina's wife).....	Female	60+
Wesley Tanyan.....	Male	36
George Tiger.....	Male	55+
Titaki.....	Female	60+
Wildcat.....	Male	60+

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